ACROSS / A18

GMA steps into row over Subic-Clark expressway project

ENTERTAINMENT/ G4

Celeste Legaspi: Retired but not reclusive

SPORTS / A29

RP cagers nip Chinese, stay alive

BUSINESS/ B3-1

Bislig City's prawn industry no longer small fry

Drug firms' lobby fund to reach P1B, say solons

By Christian V. Esguerra

HOW MUCH DOES IT TAKE TO KILL A BILL?

An administration lawmaker estimated that as much as P1 billion was being spent by giant pharmaceutical companies to prevent both chambers of Congress from passing a bill aimed at lowering the prices of medicines in the country.

DRUG/ A20

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Monday, July 30, 2007 ★★ 12 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 232 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

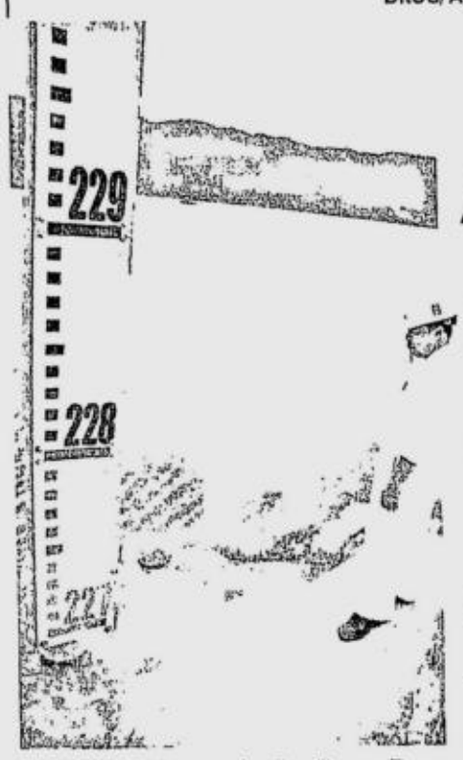
So who's the real education czar?

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE BOSS MAY BE ALways right but her underlings may end up all confused.

Education Secretary Jesli Lapus yesterday

SO WHO'S REAL/ A4



POWER turbines at the San Roque Dam in Pangasinan were turned off even before the water level could drop to its minimum of 225.552 meters for them to operate. EUSEBIO G. AGUINALDO/CONTRIBUTOR

Angat Dam reduces Metro water supply

Consumers to feel low pressure, says MWSS

By Volt Contreras and Christine O. Avendaño *in Manila* and Villamor Visaya Jr. *Inquirer Northern Luzon*

STARTING TODAY, THE amount of water supplied to Metro Manila and neighboring provinces by the Angat Dam will be reduced because the weekend downpour in these areas triggered by cloud-seeding operations failed to raise the low water level in the reservoir.

"We still need continuous downpours the next two weeks to recover," Executive Director Ramon Alikpala of the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) said on the eve of the water supply cutback that the board announced on Friday.

The situation does not yet call for water rationing or scheduled interruptions for households, at least for the next few days, according to the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS).

MWSS Administrator Lorenzo Jamora said last night that the NWRB-ordered water cutback would mainly be felt by consumers in the form of "low water pressure (in their taps) during non-peak hours," mainly from late night till dawn.

ANGAT DAM/ A12

Sham oppo 'majority' in Senate

By Amando Doronila

UPON HIS ELECTION AS SENATE PRESident on July 23, Sen. Manuel Villar fantasized himself as a president-in-waiting of the Republic by announcing his "legislative agenda" as an alternative to President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address (Sona) delivered on the same day.

ANALYSIS

Villar's agenda keynoted two themes. It called for an end to "political divisiveness" and appealed to fractious members of the Senate to maintain the chamber's "institutional independence," pointedly vis-à-vis Malacañang.

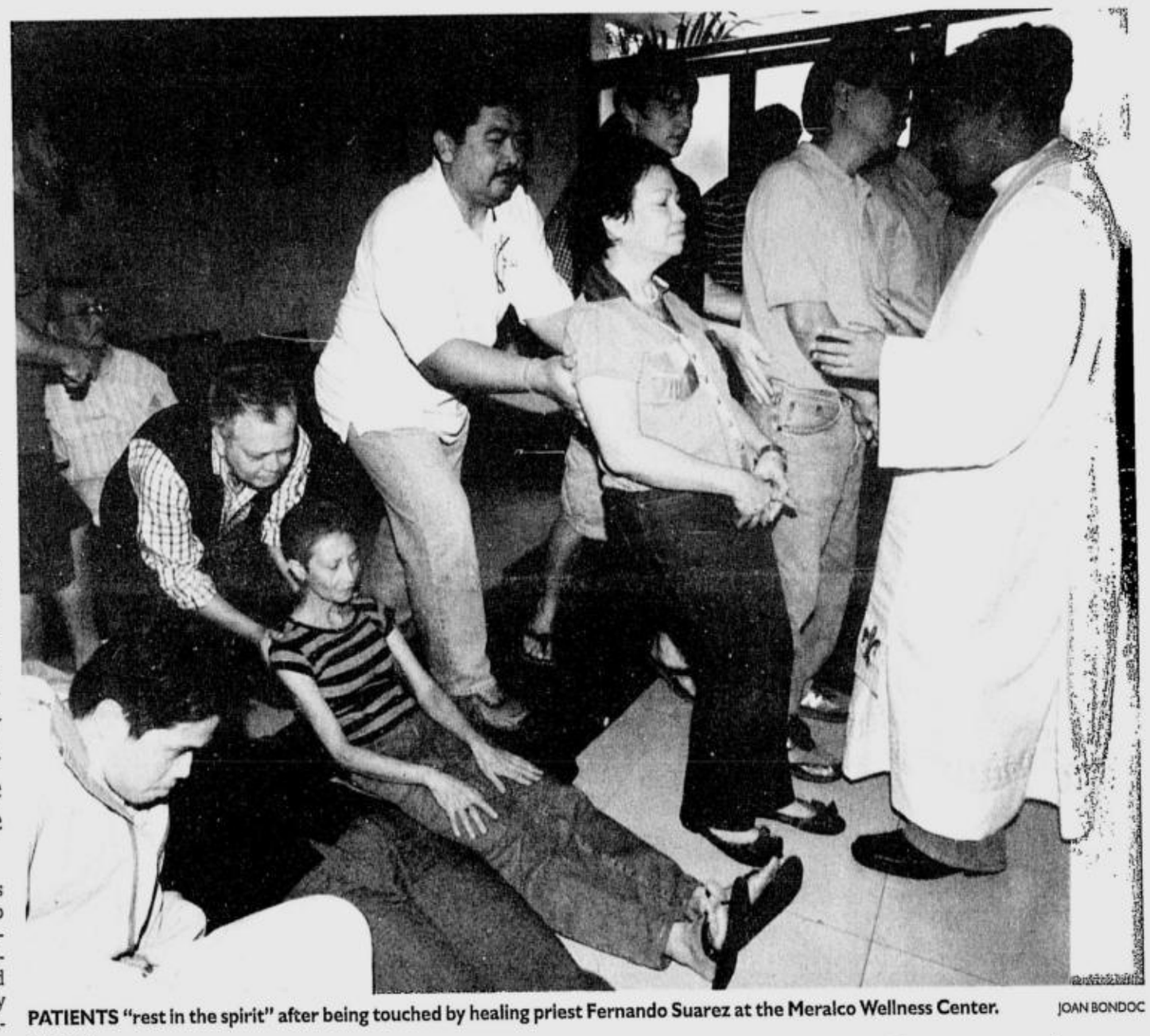
There can be no more sharply contrasting agendas, as well as visions, for the nation than the Sona and Villar's empty manifesto of intentions, inflated by motherhood statements. Villar cannot speak of a Senate agenda with members not bound by a common and shared policy outlook.

The theme of "political divisiveness" came into full play in the manner in which Villar was elected Senate President.

The divisions in the new Senate provide a fragile foundation for his leadership, let alone his agenda, and severely undermine his call on his fellow senators to assert the Senate's traditional "legislative independence"—now even more doubly threatened by the administration's overwhelming majority in the House of Representatives following May's elections.

Villar takes the helm of the Senate in a

SHAM OPPOSITION/ A23



PATIENTS "rest in the spirit" after being touched by healing priest Fernando Suarez at the Meralco Wellness Center. JOAN BONDOC

Priest heals through power of touch

By Beverly T. Natividad

HE IS SIMPLE AND UNASSUMING. IN fact, nothing in his demeanor says his very hands have healed thousands of people worldwide.

For Fr. Fernando Suarez, his ministry is not complicated. He is simply a vessel of God's healing power longing to reach out to people and remind them that He is always present.

"The bottom line is this healing is turning people back to God. The healing that I do and the healing that people feel is just what happens on the external. What really happens is spiritual healing," Suarez said.

At a time when people's faith is shaken by deaths, calamities and tragedies, the need for healing is universal, according to Suarez.

The healing, however, does not need to be a spectacular event to be believed. God's ways and miracles, much like Jesus' own ministry in the Bible, are simply the touching of people's lives, the priest explained.

Suarez's gift of healing, as many of his followers and supporters would attest, comes through the power of touch. He simply prays with those seeking healing and touches him or her, in the process extending God's healing hand.

"The gift of touch, that's what he (Suarez) has. It's Jesus in the Eucharist that heals for him. This is an extension of Jesus' healing ministry. We are called to be like Je-

PRIEST/ A22

5-year plan on nuke-free zone OKd

FOREIGN MINISTERS FROM Southeast Asia are due to adopt a five-year work plan to strengthen the implementation of a treaty banning nuclear weapons in the region, a Philippine diplomat said.

Since 1997, a treaty creating the South East Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SEANWFZ) has been in force in the region, limiting the use of nuclear power by members to peaceful purposes, such as power generation.

The 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) have all signed the treaty.

"The work plan was formulated to provide tangible plans and benchmarks that will align the ac-

5-YEAR PLAN/ A20

PCPO-MALACAÑANG PHOTO

FOREIGN Secretary Alberto Romulo (right) welcomes North Korean Foreign Minister Oak Ui-Chun before the start of bilateral talks.

Asean offers sanctuary to nationals

By Cynthia D. Balana

NATIONALS OF THE ASSOCIAtion of Southeast Asian Nations caught in civil conflicts can seek assistance from the embassy of any Asean country under a Philippine-sponsored agreement to be approved today.

The draft of a standard operating procedure (SOP) on extending consular assistance by Asean missions in war-torn third countries to Asean nationals will be presented at the start of the 40th Asean Ministerial Meeting (AMM) in Manila.

President Macapagal-Arroyo will keynote the meeting with a call on the participants to speed up regional cooperation in political, security, economic and socio-cultural initiatives under a "one caring and sharing community"—the theme of the Asean summit in Cebu in January.

Initiated by the Philippines, the SOP provides for an "Asean member country to provide assistance to nationals of another Asean state similar to that given to its own nationals, based on ca-

ASEAN/ A22

Burma blocks human rights body

SOUTHEAST ASIAN DIPLOMATS have failed to reach full agreement on the creation of a human rights commission in a landmark charter they are drafting, a diplomat said yesterday.

Military-ruled Burma (Myanmar), which has been condemned for its dismal human rights record, has objected to any mention of a human rights commission in the charter being drafted by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean).

Diplomats in an Asean task force writing the charter will submit a draft that includes the formation of a rights commission to the bloc's foreign ministers at their annual meeting in Manila today, a diplomat on the task force said.

But the document will state that Burma did not accept the commission, leaving it to the ministers to resolve the issue, the diplomat told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam also suggested they are not ready

BURMA/ A23

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MONDAY, JULY 30, 2007

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(All in exact order)

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao will have cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms, mostly in the afternoon or evening.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY CYRIL L. BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/07/30/07 SOURCE PAGASA

Nominees' feud in top party-list reaches SC

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE FEUD OVER WHO SHOULD represent the No. 1 party-list group Buhay (Buhay Hayaan Yumabong) in Congress is not over.

A party-list lawmaker who lost his seat in Buhay to a rival faction supposedly supported by El Shaddai leader Bro. Mike Velarde isn't raising the white flag just yet.

After losing his case in the Commission on Elections (Comelec), Buhay Rep. Hans Christian Señeres has filed a petition in the Supreme Court seeking to block the oath-taking of Velarde's nominees—incumbent Rep. Rene Velarde and newcomers William Irwin Tieng and Ma. Carissa Coscolluela.

Señeres, who represented Buhay in the 13th Congress together with Velarde, also asked the high tribunal to nullify the Comelec resolution recognizing the three candidates as the legitimate nominees of Buhay.

In its resolution, the Comelec en banc recognized the presidency of Melquiades "Mel" Robles of Buhay and, consequently, his authority in the party.

Robles was El Shaddai spokesperson until his appointment as head of the Light Railway Transit Authority (LRTA).

Robles had endorsed Velarde, Tieng and Coscolluela as Buhay party-list representatives in the 14th Congress.

The Comelec resolution paved the way for Robles' nominees to be the duly recognized Buhay party-list representatives, and not the set of nominees submitted by Señeres.

With more than a million votes garnered in the last elections, Buhay was the only party-list group to be given three seats in the House by the Comelec.

In a 15-page petition, Señeres said the Comelec committed "grave abuse of discretion" when it recognized Robles as the legitimate leader of the pro-life group.

Excluded from list

Robles had excluded Señeres from his list of nominees. Acting in his capacity as Buhay secretary general, Señeres submitted a list of his own.

But the Comelec sided with Robles, saying he had the authority to pick the nominees because he was Buhay president in a "hold-over capacity."

In his petition in the Supreme Court, Señeres argued that Robles was "disqualified, by constitutional fiat, from being a nominating officer for a party-list group like Buhay."

According to Señeres, Robles had been naturally disqualified from serving as Buhay president after he was appointed administrator of government-owned LRTA.

He cited a constitutional provision which states that "no officer or employee in the civil service shall engage, directly or indirectly, in any electioneering or partisan political campaign."

"This is a plain and simply-worded constitutional provision which requires no interpretation," he said. "Yet the Comelec outrightly disregarded this provision."

Right authority

As LRTA administrator, Robles could be considered resigned from Buhay because the law disallows government officials from joining political parties, he said.

In the absence of a president, he, as secretary general of Buhay, was the right authority to submit a set of nominees, Señeres argued.

The INQUIRER tried to reach Robles on his mobile phone but failed to get a response.

"(There was) no question that acting as Buhay president and nominating officer is engaging in electioneering or partisan political campaign (on the part of Robles)," Señeres wrote.

Robles, however, had earlier argued that Señeres' list "is not an authorized list." He charged that the list was composed of non-Buhay members. He added that the Buhay national council has expelled Señeres for "actions inimical" to the organization.

Resolving Senate impasse may take 3 weeks, says Villar

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SENATE PRESIDENT MANUEL Villar said it could take up to three weeks before the chairmanships of the various Senate committees are announced even though 80 percent of the 36 committees already had leaders.

"The 14th Congress is just a week old. We might need between one and three weeks to finish everything," Villar said in an interview over dzBB radio.

"But we've already resolved almost everything, there are just a few items left. We decided to make just one announcement to give us more flexibility in our discussions and to avoid embarrassing anybody," he said.

Villar revealed that 80 percent of the committees had been assigned but would not say whether these included the committee on accountability of public officials and investigations, popularly known as the blue ribbon panel.

The chairmanship of the blue ribbon committee is being contested by both opposition and administration senators.

Party affiliations

Villar said that aside from looking at senators as administration or opposition or independent, "we also look at their party affiliations in determining who sits as committee chairs."

"There is the LP (Liberal Party), NP (Nacionalista Party), PDP-Laban and PMP (Partido ng Masang Pilipino). Our people do not realize that senators move according to party lines and not because they are GO (Genuine Opposition) or TU (Team Unity)," said Villar who has been sharply criticized by opposition colleagues for joining the majority bloc dominated by the administration to retain the post of Senate President.

Villar downplayed the rift between the opposition and the administration senators over the blue ribbon chairmanship, saying that "the jostling for other committees were more intense and sensitive."

Workhorses

Villar said he expected the Senate's Generation X members—Alan Peter Cayetano, Francis Escudero and Miguel Zubiri—to be the "workhorses" of the 14th Congress.

"I have high hopes that the young ones will carry the load of our work here at the Senate. They were the young ones when I was Speaker of the House and even then I saw their brilliance," said Villar.

He said he was just letting the brickbats against him fly by because it would not make any sense to hit back at his colleagues. "Even my family wants me to talk back. But I told them nothing will come of any argument. Just remember that some of them just feel bad because they did not get what they wanted. This will pass," said Villar, who noted that the set-up in the Senate was no different from the previous arrangement where the majority was a mix of senators from different alliances.

Koko to file formal poll protest today

LOSING SENATORIAL CANDIDATE Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III is expected to file today a formal complaint in the Senate Electoral Tribunal questioning the Commission on Elections' proclamation of Juan Miguel "Migz" Zubiri as the 12th winning senator in the May 14 elections.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Koko's father, expressed confidence the electoral protest would be resolved quickly since the subject of the protest is limited to the vote count in Maguindanao which gave Zubiri a slim margin over Koko.

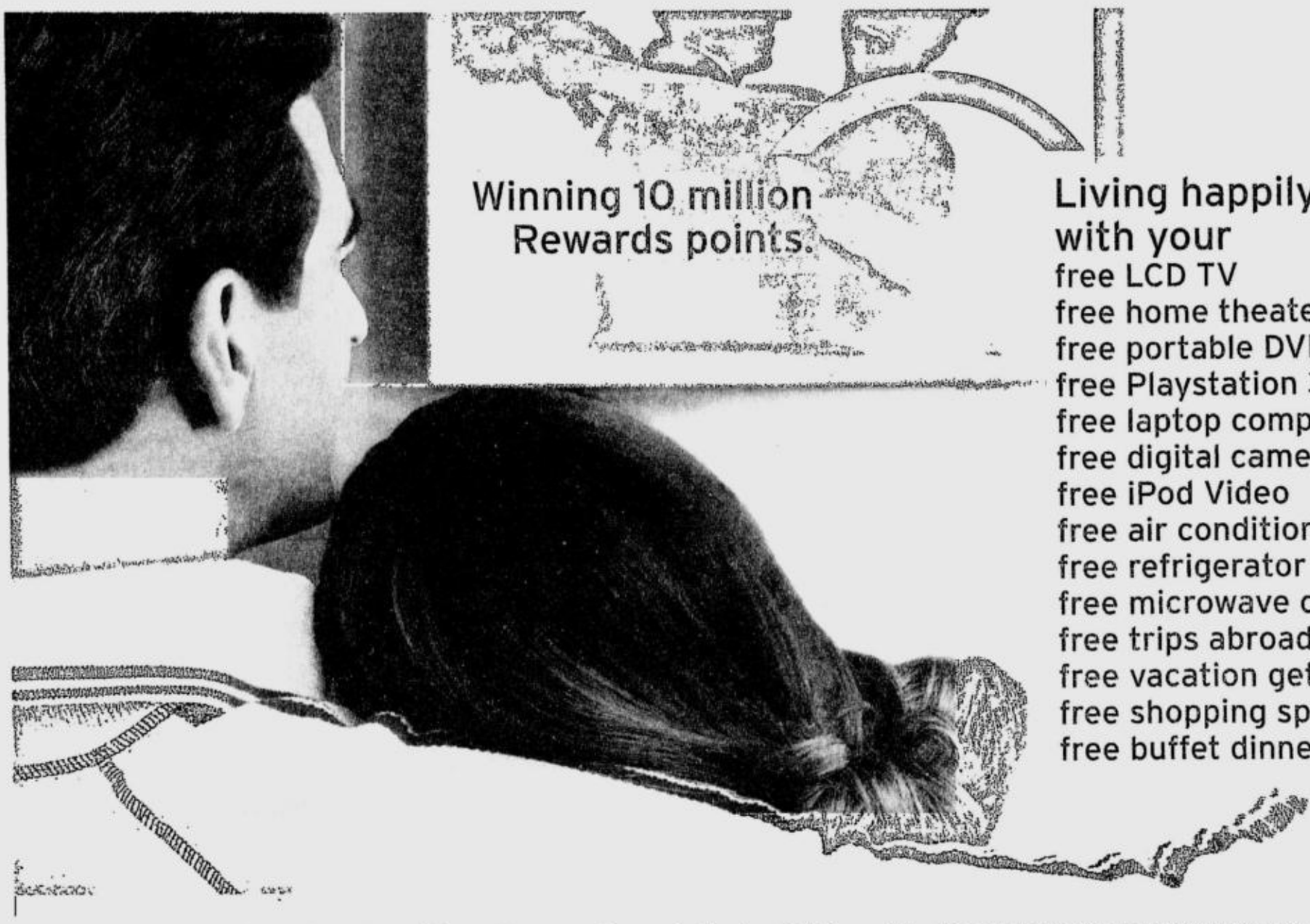
"An election protest is a long process. But I don't think this is going to be a prolonged inquiry. Koko will center his protest on one province only, the manipulation in Maguindanao. If the SET erases the 196,000 votes Zubiri got there, the boxing match is over," said Pimentel. "We hope to settle this within six months."

"Of course Migz has the right to raise a counterprotest but the SET has a rule that if you cannot prove 25 percent of your protest, your case would be dismissed immediately. Under the leadership of Chief Justice [Reynato] Puno, I think Koko will get a solution to Maguindanao," said Pimentel.

Pimentel said Koko's lawyers would prove the complicity of the Comelec in the alleged election cheating in Maguindanao where the administration bets surprisingly routed the opposition, 12-0.

Pimentel said Maguindanao's certificates of canvass were so "clean" they were "improbable."

While the election required seven copies of CoCs, the Comelec was only able to produce one copy which was bereft of any erasures. Pimentel claimed that the CoC was cleaned up by the Comelec so it would not be questioned. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*



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So who's real education czar?

From page A1

said there was a need to clarify an executive order designating a presidential assistant as coordinator of the Department of Education, Commission on Higher Education and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority.

The executive order was seen in some sectors as tantamount to appointing a de facto education czar.

"There is already an existing presidential assistant for education. And I don't think you can call a presidential assistant a czar," Lapus said in a phone interview.

He said he was not consulted about the executive order.

"The boss is always right, but I'm sure she will clarify that to us soon," Lapus said.

Lapus said newly appointed CHEd Chair Romulo Neri told him he had not been designated education czar. Neri previously headed the National Economic Development Authority.

"He said his appointment was temporary and that he was only sent to do a special assignment in CHEd,'" Lapus said.

Lapus said he himself was not aware an education czar had been designated.

Treated like a football

Ms Arroyo's Cabinet changes, including those affecting Neri and Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes, have drawn fire from the opposition.

"She has treated her Cabinet secretaries like a football," said Sen. Aquilino Pimentel. Adding to the confusion, Pimentel said, was the appointment of former Sen. Heherson Alvarez as head of the state-owned Philippine Mining Development Corp.

"It is confusing how can there be an education or mining czar when there are fully functioning secretaries in these areas," Pimentel said.

Lapus doubted that a presidential assistant for education could effectively coordinate the DepEd, CHEd and Tesda.

"If the presidential assistant has no line authority, I don't think it will be effective," Lapus said.

The INQUIRER reported that Ms Arroyo issued Executive Order No. 632 on July 10 abolishing the National Coordinating Council for Education and designating a presidential assistant to take over its functions.

Lapus explained that the NCCE, which is the coordinating body for the DepEd, CHEd and Tesda, never functioned since it was created in the previous administration.

But Lapus said replacing the council with a mere presidential assistant much lower in rank than a Cabinet secretary would not improve coordination.

Under one roof

"Maybe we should call a spade a spade. Why coordinate? Maybe we should just lump the three together for practical management," he said.

The DepEd, which Lapus said accounted for a third of the entire government bureaucracy, is in charge of primary and secondary education. The CHEd and Tesda, both under the Office of the President, are concerned with tertiary education.

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Corrections

IN THE JULY 29 ISSUE, a front-page story—"Young and restless 1st termers set to rock House"—misspelled the first name of the youngest member of the House of Representatives. The youngest lawmaker is Sharee—not Sharrie—Ann Tan. She is a representative of Western Samar.

* * *

THE SAME ARTICLE misstated that Valenzuela City is part of Bulacan. Valenzuela City used to be part of Bulacan province, but it is now part of Metro Manila.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, an article on Page A5—"Opposition should get blue ribbon, says Kiko"—misstated that Sen. Francis Pangilinan was a guest candidate of the Genuine Opposition during the May 14 elections. Pangilinan ran as an independent candidate.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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TV reporter, crew to be asked to shed light on beheading

By Julie S. Alipala
Inquirer Mindanao

ZAMBOANGA CITY—A TELEVISION CREW that took footage of the July 10 clash between Philippine Marines and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebels in Albarka, Basilan, will be asked by the government to testify against those believed to have been behind the ambush.

Fourteen Marines were killed while nine others were wounded in that battle. Ten of the fatalities were beheaded.

Regional State Prosecutor Ricardo Cabaron said he would "appreciate" the help of GMA-7 reporter Jun Veneracion and cameramen Donato Roxas and Julius Catibog, who were with the Marines during the attack.

Cabaron said their personal accounts and video footage would give government prosecutors a clear idea of what happened.

"If we cannot get them through voluntary processes then we will ask the court to issue the compulsory process," he said.

A source privy to the closed-door meeting of the government-MILF coordinating committee on the cessation of hostilities (CCCH) said Veneracion and his team would be asked to "testify to shed light on the incident." The CCCH is investigating the beheadings.

Bandits' trademark

Veneracion earlier told the INQUIRER he was willing to give information to the authorities if the case against the suspects prospered.

Top military officers have said the beheading of captives has become the trademark of bandits in Basilan.

The MILF admitted its forces were behind the ambush but denied any hand in the beheading.

Other reports attributed the beheadings to Abu Sayyaf members who had camps near the ambush site.

According to Western Mindanao Command chief Lt. Gen. Eugenio Cedo, the beheading and mutilation is called the "*pintakasi*."

"Once you fall or land in the hands of the attackers or enemies, *pagtututulungan ka nila* (they will gang up on you), doing all unimaginable acts even if you are already dead," Cedo said.

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., in a press conference on Friday, said that beheadings were not a new thing in Basilan. "We know about the beheadings even way back in 1970s," he said.

Esperon said when he was assigned to the island as a young lieutenant, "there was no Abu Sayyaf Group then, but beheading was one of the practices of people in the area."

Dr. Nilo Barandino, a physician based in Basilan who conducts post-mortem examinations, told the INQUIRER that about 70 soldiers and civilians were beheaded in the 1980s.

The "majority of those beheaded were soldiers," Barandino said.

Col. Daniel Lucero, a member of Esperon's staff, also recalled that when he was with the 5th Infantry Battalion, seven soldiers were beheaded and mutilated in Barangay Duga-a in Tuburan town on Feb. 14, 1984.

In July 2001, two soldiers were beheaded in Barangay Sinulatan in Tuburan, Lucero added.

Earlier mutilations

Marine Lt. Col. Rudy de Bellen recalled that 21 members of the 1st Marine Battalion suffered mutilations, four of them were decapitated, in Barangay Candis, Tuburan town, on Feb. 9, 2003.

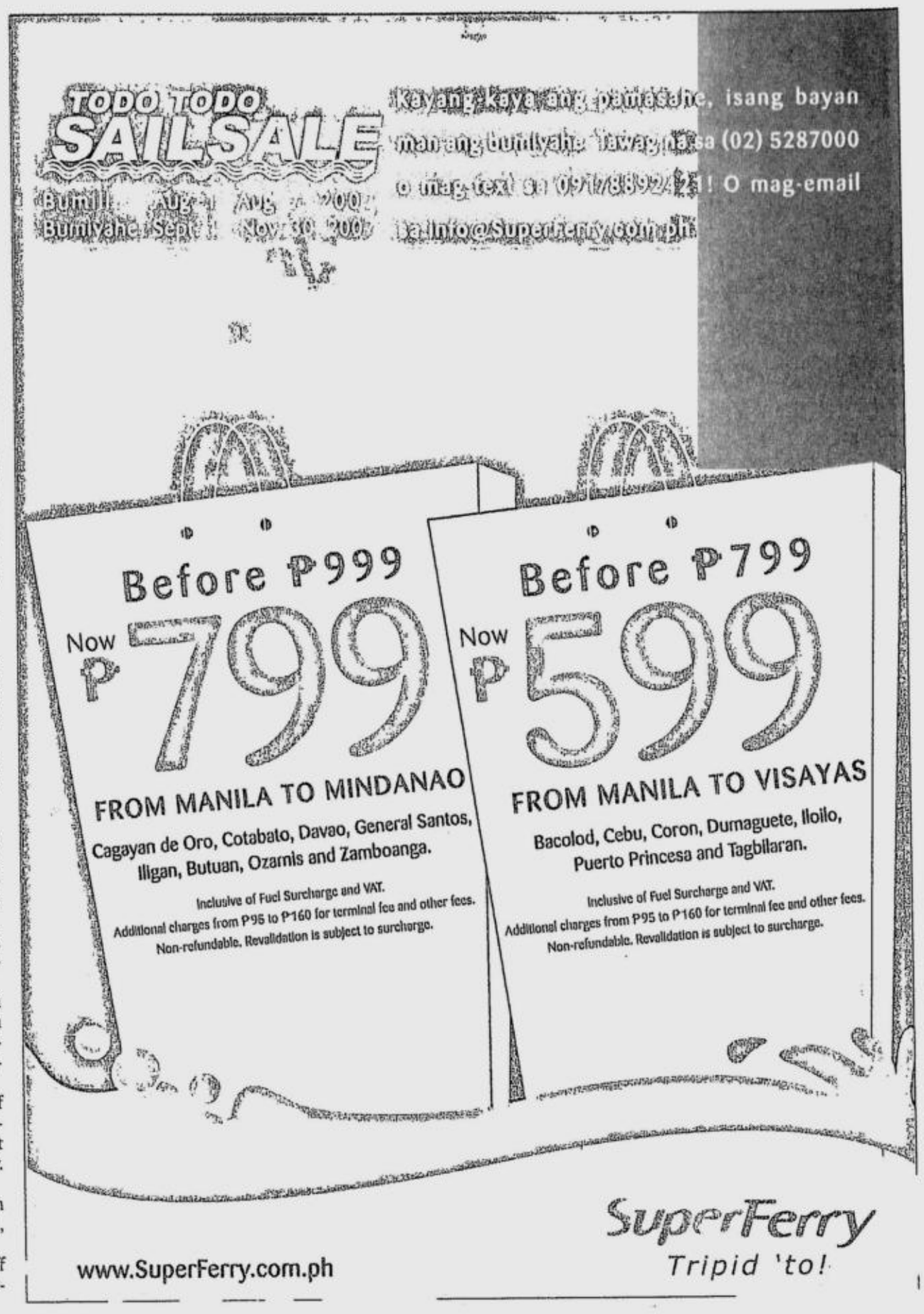
"The Marines had come from a feast and they were poisoned before they were attacked," De Bellen said.

The suspects were led by Dorie Kalahal, a commander of the Moro National Liberation Front, he said. Kalahal is now mayor of Tuburan proper, having availed himself of the government's amnesty offer.

Barandino, who saw some of the victims of the July 10 ambush, said the mutilation happened between 6:30 p.m. and 7 p.m., not midnight as earlier reported by Basilan Gov. Jum Jainuddin Akbar.

Akbar earlier told the INQUIRER that when the remains were retrieved at around 10 p.m., the bodies were still intact.

Akbar said she was informed by her staff that some of the bodies were beheaded during the second retrieval at around midnight.



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The scientific sessions, comprising of lectures and panel discussions, shall feature evolutions in the diagnosis and management of the various conditions including cancer, affecting the head and neck, thyroid, breast, liver, biliary tree, pancreas, stomach, duodenum, colon and rectum. Likewise, evolutions in the diagnosis and management of abdominal trauma and in the palliative and end of life care in the cancer patient shall be taken up in the sessions.

HISTORY

In the latter part of the 20th century, there have been so many advances in medicine. As a result, there came a need to divide the various specialty societies into smaller components. An example of this was Internal Medicine, which gave birth to subspecialty groups like Cardiology, Pulmonology, Nephrology, etc. Surgery was not spared from this reorientation with new advances in surgical technology, research, and development. The Philippine College of Surgeons (PCS), the premier surgical specialty society, saw the organization of various subspecialty groups like Orthopedics, Thoracic & Cardiovascular Surgery, Urology, Neurosurgery, and others. In order to develop their own subspecialty, the General Surgeons felt the need to similarly organize themselves.

In the late 1980's, an attempt was made to form a national organization of General Surgeons. However, the concept met some resistance and it was only in 1991 when the idea was again floated . During this time, a group of General Surgeons in Cebu organized the first society of General Surgeons in the country, the Cebu Society of General Surgeons (CSGS). Dr. Willie N. Lagdameo, then Chair of the Board of Governors of the Philippine College of Surgeons, revived the issue of organizing a national society of General Surgeons. Spearheaded by the CSGS and through Dr. Samuel D. Trocio, the PCS Cebu Chapter's Governor, the Board of Governors submitted a letter to the PCS for the creation of a national General Surgery subspecialty group.

In 1997, Dr. Florentino C. Doble, President of the PCS, favorably endorsed the concept to the PCS Board of Regents, its highest policy-making body. Dr. Antonio B. Sison, upon his assumption to the PCS Presidency in the following year, again favorably endorsed the proposal. These endorsements snowballed throughout the country until the creation of a national organization of General Surgeons became inevitable and imminent.

During the 1998 PCS Midyear Convention in Davao City, a Board of Incorporators was organized to finalize the creation of the national specialty society for General Surgeons and to begin drafting its constitution and by-laws. After numerous meetings and consultations, the Incorporators finally called for an organizational meeting during the December 1998 PCS Annual Convention to formally introduce the Society and begin accepting charter members. In January 1999, the Philippine Society of General Surgeons was incorporated and registered with the Philippine Securities and Exchange Commission. On May 13, 1999, during the PCS Midyear Convention in Subic, Zambales, the Board of Incorporators conducted a mass induction for all charter members.

To date, the Society has a membership of 913 Fellows. Among its many activities are the formulation of continuing surgical educational programs to update its membership of the latest surgical information, upgrading of surgical curriculum, the monitoring of 64 accredited GS Residency Training Programs nationwide where future GS specialists are trained and developed, preparation of Evidence-Based Clinical Practice Guidelines to assist GS practitioners, research of new surgical information and technology, and the conduct of various community out reach, socio-civic and environmental conservation activities.

Dear Colleagues:

It is with great pride and pleasure that I invite all Fellows and guests to our 5th PSGS Surgical Forum on August 2 3, and 4, 2007 at the EDSA Shangri-La Hotel, Mandaluyong City.

The theme for this year's Surgical Forum is "Evolutions in General Surgery." It is interesting to note that the practice of General Surgery is one of the oldest among the surgical disciplines. Over time, concepts and practices in the management of various surgical conditions have evolved. The significant changes reflecting the current knowledge on the pathophysiology and advances in technology, shall be dissected to see whether they really had an impact on the way we do our surgery these days. Among the topics are evolutions in the surgical management of thyroid, breast, gastric diseases, hepatobiliary and others.

These topics, will certainly be very interesting for al participants, both young and old. For the younger surgeons, it will be an interesting peek into the way things were done before and learn from the tenets of the past. Perhaps, they will come to realize that the 'oldies are still goodies"? For the senior ones, this will be a trip down memory lane and hopefully acceptance of the current modalities. Apart from the scientific program, a very exciting Fellowship Night with a raffle bonanza has been prepared to spice up the Surgical Forum.

So my dear fellows and guests, let us take this opportunity to enhance our professional expertise, renew old acquaintances, make new friends and strengthen the bonds of our fellowship.

Mabuhay ang PSGSI

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Supreme Court axes QC judge, 4 court workers

By Jerome Aning

"THIS COURT HAS repeatedly stressed its unbending policy not to tolerate or condone any act or omission that falls short of the exacting norms of public office, especially those expected to preserve the image of the judiciary."

With these words, the Supreme Court dismissed an insubordinate Quezon City judge as well as four other court employees involved in bribery, cash bond fraud and the faking of credentials.

Judge Fatima Asdala of QC Regional Trial Court Branch 87 was relieved for intervening in a child support case she was trying and for defying court regulations by appointing her own clerk of court.

"Such repeated infractions and heedless transgressions could no longer be countenanced by this Court," the justices said.

Reduced fine

Court records showed Asdala met in private with the defendant in a child support case after she had sentenced him to four months imprisonment and a P30,000-fine for indirect contempt in 2001.

After the meeting, the judge issued an order reducing the fine to P5,000 and subsequently dismissed the complaint for insufficiency of evidence.

The high tribunal also found that Asdala "blithely and willfully disregarded" a Supreme Court memorandum when she insisted in designating stenographer Myrla Nicandro officer in charge and acting branch clerk of court instead of the person appointed by the Office of the Court Administrator.

The judge's actions "miserably fell short" of her duties as an officer of the court and a "living embodiment of law and justice," the Court said.

The Court recalled that Asdala had been previously found guilty of various administrative offenses at least four times—for partiality, grave abuse of discretion, gross misconduct, and unjustified failure to render decisions within the prescribed period.

Labor cases

Nicandro was reprimanded and suspended for 60 days.

The Supreme Court also dismissed Bukidnon assistant provincial sheriff Tyrone Tan and Manila court stenographer Noemi Mercado for asking for money to settle pending lawsuits.

Mercado, of Manila Metropolitan Trial Court Branch 8, reportedly met with a litigant in June 2005 to help him settle pending labor cases.

She allegedly collected P10,000 for the litigant's supposed bail and turned over to him the original records of the case. The litigant, however, was still arrested.

Later, Mercado helped the litigant file a P1,045,264.43 surety bond and collected a 3-percent commission. The surety bond was later rejected because the insurance agency that processed it was found to have an expired license to operate.

The Supreme Court dismissed Tan for receiving P15,000 from the complainant in a land dispute case.

Also sacked was Eladia Cunting, a clerk of court in Zamboanga City, for keeping and misappropriating cash bonds entrusted to her between September 2003 and March 2004.

The Supreme Court also ordered the dismissal of Santos Ernie Perocho Jr., a process server at Mandaluyong City RTC 161, for faking his civil service exam grade in his application form.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, July 30, 2007
17th Week in Ordinary Time
Peter Chrysologus

1st Reading: Ex 32:15-24, 30-34
Gospel: Matthew 13:31-35

Jesus put another parable before the crowds, "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, that a man took and sowed in his field.

"It is smaller than all other seeds, but once it has fully grown, it is bigger than any garden plant; like a tree, the birds come and rest in its branches."

He told them another parable, "The kingdom of heaven is like the yeast that a woman took and buried in three measures of flour until the whole mass of dough began to rise."

Jesus taught all this to the crowds by means of parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. So what the Prophet had said was fulfilled: I will speak in parables. I will proclaim things kept secret since the beginning of the world.

Commentary

Moses comes down with the tablets of the law and he hears the outcry in the camp—the people worshipping the golden calf they made, drinking and dancing, and committing acts of sexual degeneration that were part of pagan rituals. He breaks the tablets of the law. He destroys the calf and reduces it to powder which he makes the people drink and then they get sick. Aaron is chastised for making the idol and he blames the people. All have sinned gravely and Moses goes back to the Lord to make atonement for their evil. He offers his life for the peoples' lives. Moses is sent back to lead the people and God will punish in his own time those who sinned.

Jesus tells the parable of the mustard seed—miniscule yet tough. Once it grows, it is unstoppable, moving into every cranny, taking over everything. And the birds love it—they come and nest and hide from those that would kill them. This is God's word and God's kingdom/community. It shelters the least, and once it is loose, its freedom and power go everywhere. Yeast buried in flour—a huge amount that will feed the world in its hunger—is another image of Jesus buried and risen, and an image of all of us buried with Christ in God. It is hard work but the dough rises and we will all rise in Christ. Who are we protecting and feeding?

FVR: We did it during Asian crisis, we can do it again

By Jeannette I. Andrade

FILIPINOS, ONCE UNITED, CAN ACHIEVE true economic growth and sustainable development, according to former President Fidel V. Ramos.

Speaking before members of the Rotary Club of Balintawak during induction ceremonies at the Manila Polo Club in Makati City last week, Ramos said he believes the nation could rise up, as it did a decade ago at the height of the Asian financial crisis when the Philippines suffered the least among its neighbors.

However, the former President lamented: "After 10 years, where are we now? *OK lang pero kulang pa.* (We're OK but that's not enough)."

He cited a report by Asian economic experts on the 1997 financial crisis: Thailand suffered the most with a 55-percent reduction in its gross domestic product; Indonesia, 41 percent; Malaysia, 31 percent; South Korea, 8 percent; while the Philippines suffered a reduction of only 6.5 percent of its GDP.

"Why were we in better shape? Because there was an orderly transfer of power ... There is no need to go into a people power revolution, peaceful or not, to change the administration. And we have to strengthen our institutions." Ramos said.

"Why did we get off so lightly? Because our leaders really performed as leaders of a very big Filipino family," he said, referring to the 57 to 68 million Philippine population during his term from 1992 to 1998.

Ramos sniped at the virtual absence of population control in the country, pointing out that 15 years after his term, the number of Filipinos has grown to 87 million "and still counting."

"Filipinos are so productive and reproductive," he said. "We are growing at a rate of 2.3 percent or 2.6 percent every year, one of the highest in the world."

He noted that in other predominantly Catholic countries, the annual rate of population growth was less than one percent.

"They balance population with environment and sustainable development, which means they are taking better care of their younger generations than we are," Ramos said.

"This is for Malacañang and the 14th Congress to focus on: To remove poverty, the underlying concern is to make the economy grow. Economic activity, so far, was benefited a privileged handful, economic dynasties, those putting up high-rise property developments, bankers," he said.

"From your *kuya* (big brother)," he addressed the members of the Rotary Club International, "Begin to focus on development as a national community, a national society ... so eventually we can look at the world and say we have done it."

Coco tillers plot next move

THE COUNTRY'S COconut farmers do not want to be kept in the dark about the government's planned sale of its stake in San Miguel Corp. (SMC).

A coconut farmers group, Pambansang Koalisyon ng mga Samahan ng Magsasaka at Manggagawa sa Niyugan (PKSMMN), said it remained unclear to them how the government will disburse the expected proceeds from the sale of the SMC stake to the coconut farmers, who are the real beneficiaries of the coconut levy-funded SMC shares.

PKSMMN president Efren Villaseñor said the Department of Finance has postponed a scheduled meeting with the coconut farmers three times already.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, he said, had earlier told the coconut farmers that the government wanted to remit the expected proceeds from the sale of the SMC shares to the national coffers first before the funds are distributed to the farmers.

Villaseñor said that the finance department was supposed to meet with them last week to present a plan on the prompt disbursement of the funds to the coconut farmers.

"Mukhang tingin namin wala talagang ipe-presentang plano ang gobyerno kung paano gagawin 'to kasi tatlong beses na nila pinapo-postpone ang meeting (It appears the government has no plan to present because the meeting has been postponed three times)," said Villaseñor.

PKSMMN is set to meet with Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla today to strategize on the possible actions it will take in anticipation of their meetings with the government.

Villaseñor said with the repeated postponements of the meetings, the coconut farmers are now concerned the government is gearing to sell the SMC stake and use the funds without consulting the farmers.

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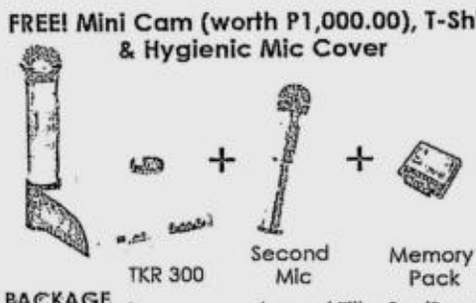

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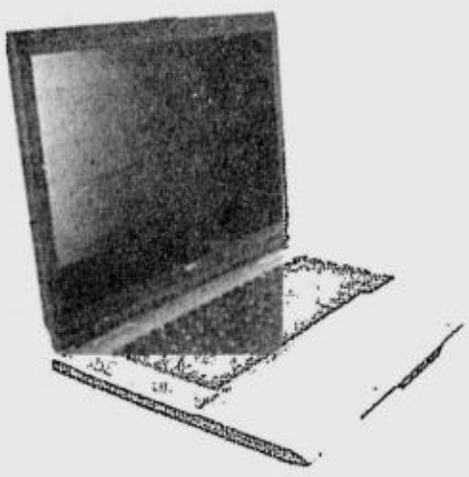

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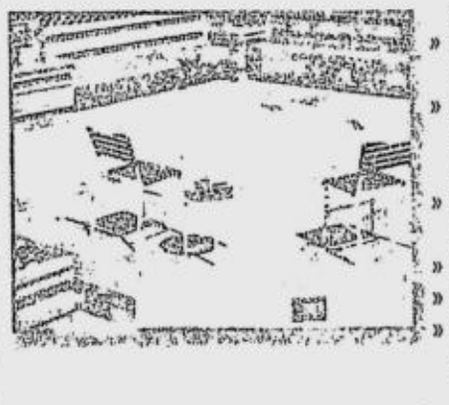

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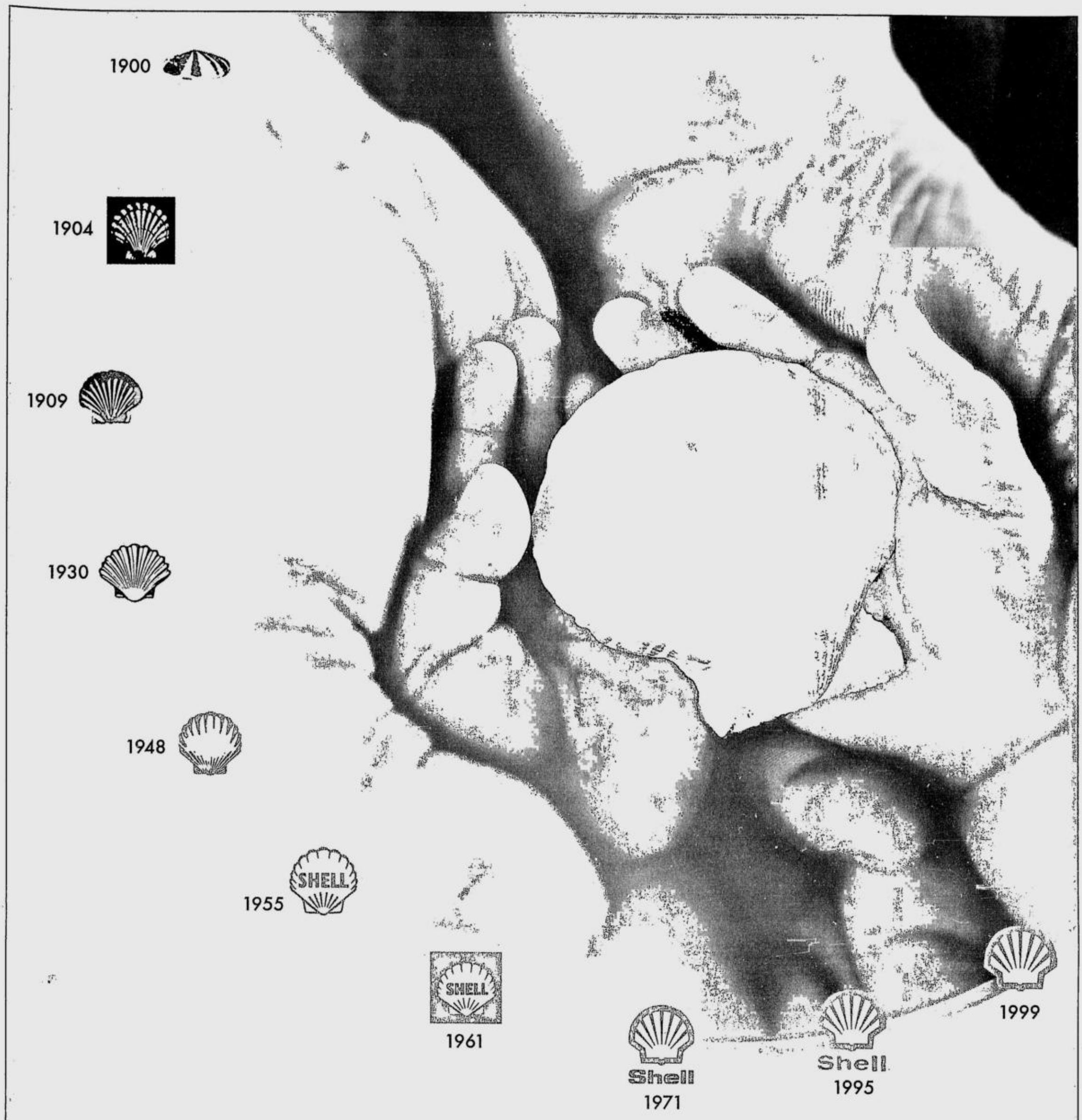

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Keep tourist spots dengue-free, execs urged

TOURISM SECRETARY Joseph Ace Durano Saturday called on local government officials to help prevent the spread of dengue in areas frequented by foreign visitors.

"I want to call on the mayors of tourist destinations in the country to take the necessary measures to prevent dengue outbreaks in their areas," Durano told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

The secretary said the Department of Tourism, in coordination with the Department of Health, would assist mayors in launching information drives about dengue and other projects such as cleaning their surroundings, spraying mosquito repellent and preparing medical facilities.

Durano said tourism stakeholders such as resort owners, hoteliers and tour operators should be made aware of dengue and should make preparations so their foreign guests and clients would have speedy access to medical treatment should they contract the disease.

The DOT has been concerned about last week's reported dengue outbreaks in Bohol, Palawan and other provinces which are popular tourist destinations.

According to a senior tourism official, there has been no report of a foreign traveler contracting dengue in the Philippines.

He, however, said the DOT was "seriously worried" that foreign tourists visiting far-flung areas might catch the disease.

"A tourist catching dengue, or worse, dying of the disease while in the Philippines would be bad for the country's image indeed," said the official, who asked not to be named because he had no authority to speak on the issue.

"We all know that hospitals in the provinces are often far apart and some do not have adequate facilities to help dengue patients, especially foreigners who are not used to tropical diseases," he said.

The DOT official noted that travelers considered dengue "not that scary" considering there had been similar outbreaks in neighboring countries like Thailand, Singapore and Indonesia. *Jerome Aning*

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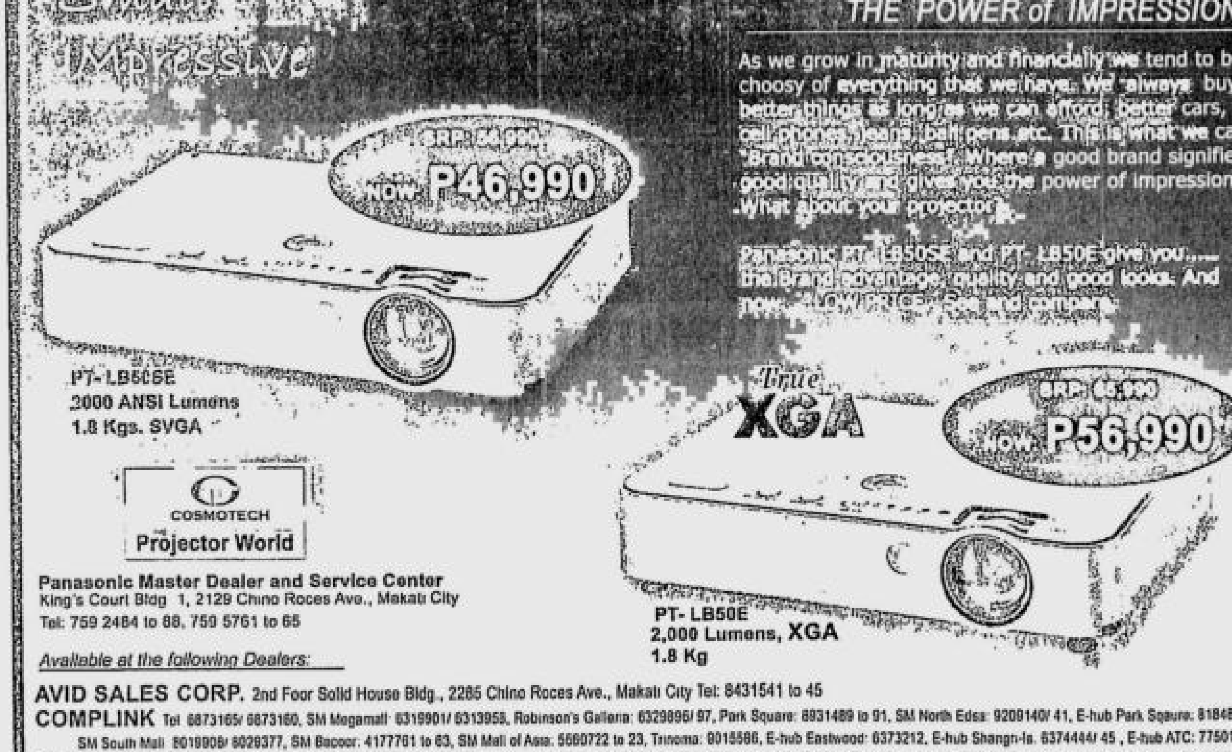
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Miaa curbs abusive airport drivers

By Tarra Quismundo

TO PROTECT TRAVELERS FROM ABUSIVE drivers, the Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa) has required transport companies operating at its terminals to get official identification cards for their employees.

The Miaa is set to fully implement in August the airport transport service ID system which would identify for passengers accredited airport taxis, car rental agencies and hotel and tour bus drivers.

"This will help ensure that drivers will treat their passengers with respect and courtesy and provide excellent service at all times, since their identities could easily be known in case of complaints or suggestions," said Miaa General Manager Alfonso Cusi in a statement.

The new ID requisite was enforced on accredited airport taxis and car rental services last week and shall be applied next to hotel and tour agency vehicles, the Miaa said.

Additional way of identification

The airport management will also require transport companies to stitch the names of their drivers to the back of their uniforms, an additional way of identifying them, the Miaa said.

There are some 2,000 drivers accredited to work out of the Naia.

Previously, drivers were permitted to ply restricted roads at Naia Terminals 1 and 2 and the Manila Domestic Airport provided they displayed vehicle and company ID cards.

"This will get rid of anomalies among drivers. With the Miaa IDs, the vehicles and drivers can be readily recognized by passengers, and this would deter drivers from committing misdeeds," said airport security chief retired Gen. Angel Atutubo in an interview.

The Miaa had received complaints about Miaa-accredited drivers ranging from overcharging to stealing luggage.

Better service

Atutubo said some drivers who were not accredited posed as such to be able to enter the airport and pick up passengers.

"Since they are clearly identified, the drivers will be ashamed to commit misdeeds," Atutubo said.

Assistant general manager for airport development Tirso Serrano hoped the new ID system would encourage drivers to render better service to travelers.

"Easy identification would inspire them to serve with a smile and extend superb service to prevent complaints and to encourage possible commendation," Serrano said.

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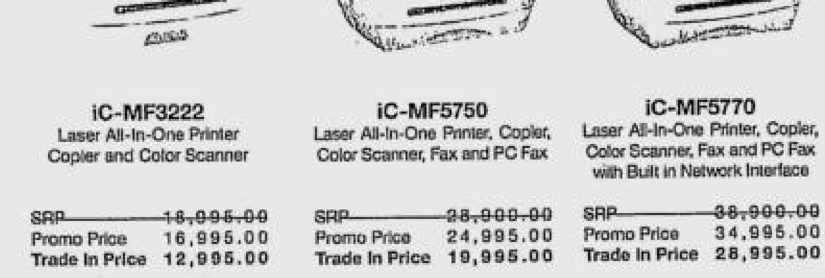

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Angat Dam reduces water supply to M

From page A1

"Consumers will hardly feel it," Jamora said, adding that the MWSS was leaving it up to its two concessionaires—Maynilad and Manila Water—to come up with their respective service adjustments.

Luzon is suffering from a prolonged dry spell that has lowered water levels in several dams that in turn has cut down the amount of power generated by hydroelectric plants. The low power supply has led to brownouts in Metro Manila and in a number of provinces in Luzon.

The weather bureau said the dry spell the past two months would continue in August. A drought is declared when an area suffers from three consecutive months of a dry spell.

The NWRB said water allocation to farms in Central Luzon would be cut from 32 cubic meters per second to 25 cu m/sec, while that for residents of Metro Manila would be reduced to 41 cu m/sec from 43 cu m/sec.

The plan, it is hoped, would stretch the supply from Angat in Bulacan until the heavy rains come.

Alikpala said the water level in Angat remained at 172 meters above sea level or "eight meters below" the normal operating level as of yesterday.

He said the mild to moderate rainfall experienced in Luzon on Saturday and Sunday "was not significant" enough to increase the water supply.

Jamora said the NWRB announcement should convince the public of the need to conserve water because if Angat's waterline continued to plunge, "they might begin to feel (the effects) by August."

Rains in other places

Science Undersecretary Graciano Yumul expressed the hope that the rains induced by the cloud-seeding operations would fall on the right places—dams and farms.

Yumul said the water levels in the dams storing water for drinking and power generation were not rising because the rains were falling on other places.

He also said that the scope of the seeding operations were limited, thus producing little rain.

Yumul said the soil was so dry that there was no runoff. "All the water percolates to the soil," he said.

Much-needed rains brought on by an intertropical convergence zone can, nevertheless, be expected in Metro Manila and other parched areas of Luzon in the next two days, according to weather forecaster Robert Rivera.

Cloud-seeding operations over Angat Dam began on July 19, but Rivera reported that naturally occurring rain clouds began covering these areas during the weekend based on satellite data.

Irrigation water

In Ramon, Isabela, the water level in the Magat Dam dropped to near its critical level on Saturday due to the absence of rainfall in its watershed area, a dam official said.

Saturnino Tenedor, Magat Dam instrumentation section chief, said the dam's level hit 163.5 meters, just 3.5 meters above its critical level.

The dam is a critical facility in Cagayan Valley as the 300 megawatts that its hydroelectric plant produces contribute to the power requirements of the Luzon grid and households and industries in the region, according to Tenedor.

Magat Dam also supplies irrigation to at least 88,000 hectares of rice lands in Isabela.

Tenedor said the dam's water intake was lower (83 cubic meters per second) than the volume it was releasing (143 cubic meters per second) for power generation and irrigation.

The dam has started rationing the supply for irrigation due to the dry spell, he said.

Three planes

With the aid of Air Force planes, the government will conduct cloud-seeding operations for a month in Metro Manila and other parts of the country.

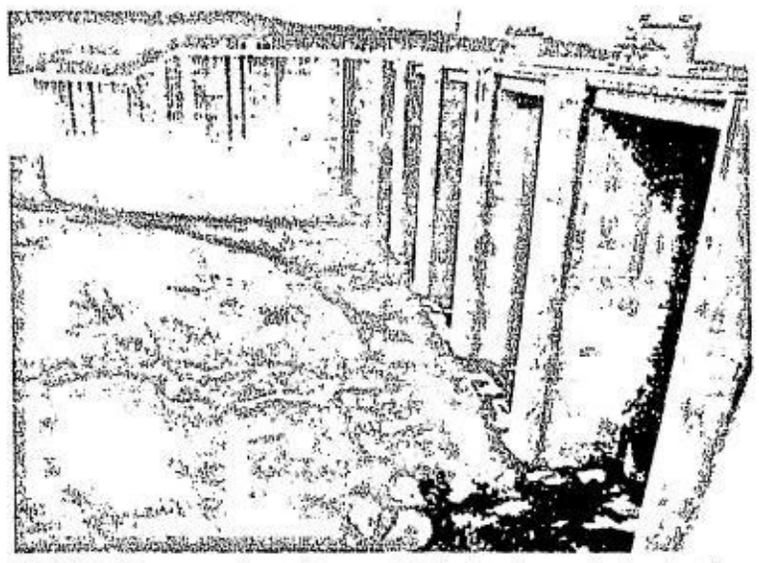
Two Air Force planes have been dispatched since Saturday to augment the cloud-seeding operations being done by a private plane for more than two weeks now, Glen Rabonza, administrator of the Office of Civil Defense, said yesterday.

He said the three planes would focus on inducing rains for water reservoirs and farmlands in Metro Manila, Ilocos Region (Region 1), Cagayan Valley (Region 2), Central Luzon (Region 3) and "even up to Western Visayas (Region 6)."

"We're prepared to do (cloud-seeding operations) for a month but we will assess periodically if we need to extend it," said Rabonza, also the executive officer of the National Disaster Coordinating Council.

Twenty-two sorties

The cloud-seeding operations are among the immediate measures being implemented by the government after President Macapagal-Arroyo issued directives to mitigate the effects of the dry spell.



NO WATER even at the spill control of the San Roque hydroelectric plant. EUSEBIO G. AGUINALDO/CONTRIBUTOR

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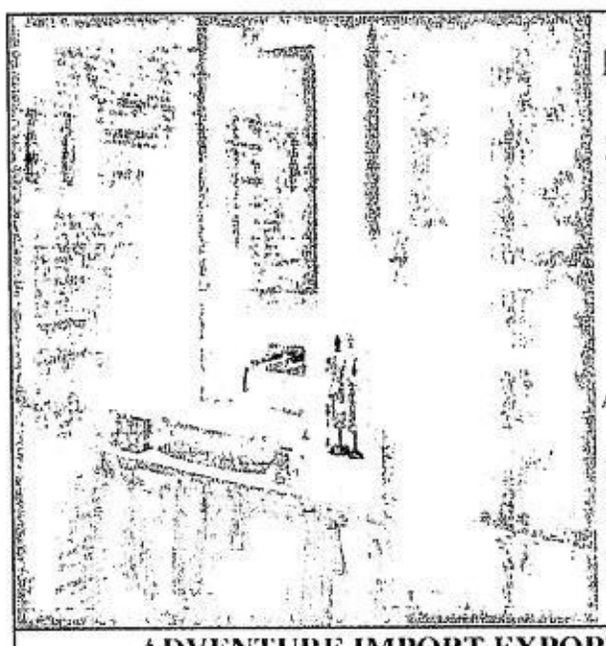
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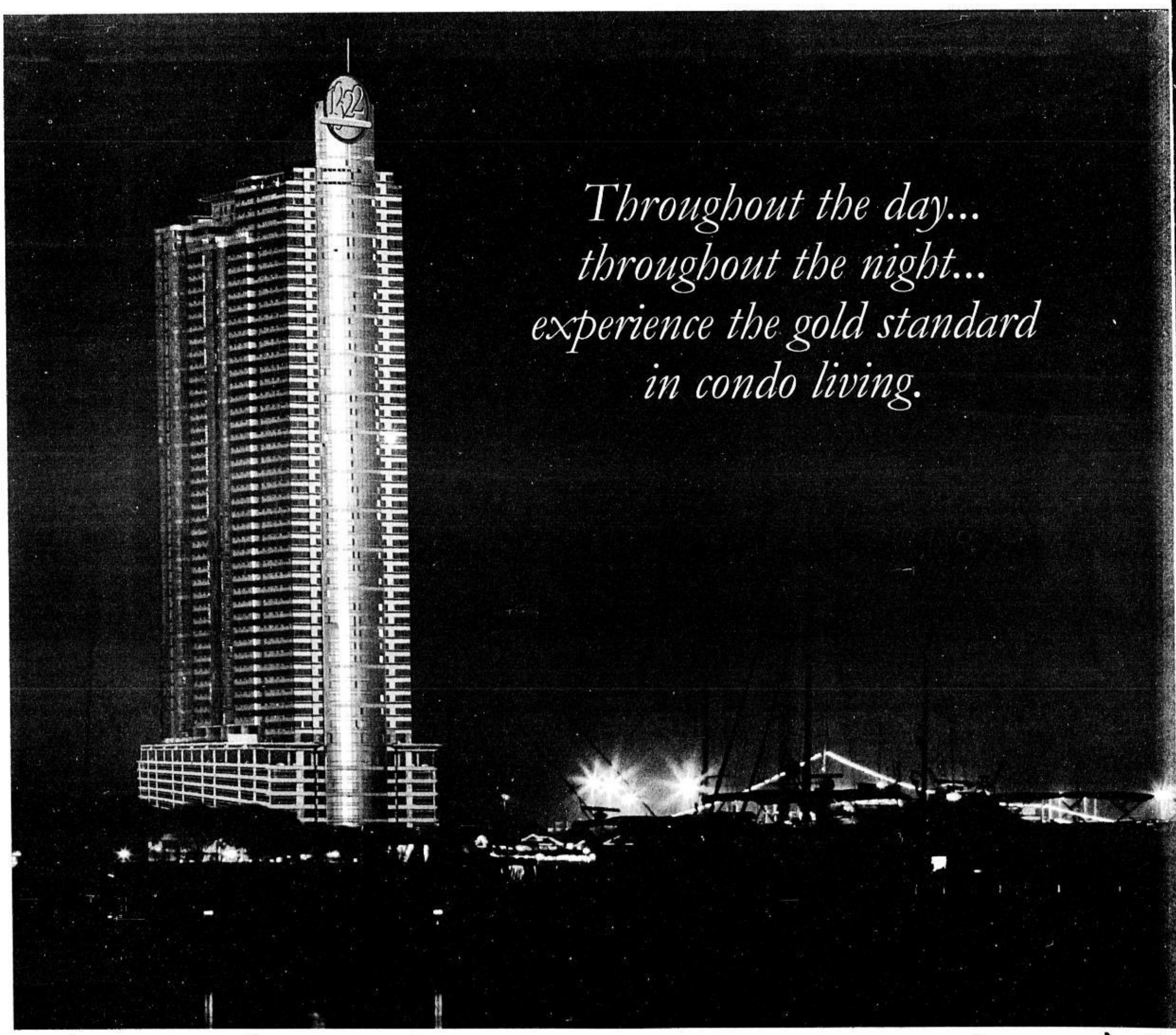

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etro Manila

of Saturday, the private hired by the Bureau of Soils Water Management had al- conducted 22 sorties in del, Bulacan, over the Angat rshed area, according to nza.

his (cloud-seeding opera-) was the one bringing rains Metro Manila for the past ," he said.

Air Force plane made a sin- ortie on Saturday over agri- ral areas in Cagayan Valley, ting in rainfall in Ilagan and ano, Rabonza said.

ized salt

nother Air Force plane made gle sortie in La Union and derate rainfall was observed fferent areas there for 20 utes," he said.

aj. Agripina Rosales, an offi- of the 900th Philippine Air e weather group in charge of cloud-seeding operations, the activity was also under- n in Central Luzon and hern Tagalog on Saturday.

e cloud-seeding operations, said, would be done in 15 s.

sales said her group used at 20 bags of iodized salt dur- he cloud-seeding operations. eparations were being un- aken to induce more rains, ime to cover 40,000 hectares e lands, according to Rabon-

We have to save our crops, and rice," he said.

5M worth of corn

st week, Isabela agriculturist lo Tumamao said at least million worth of corn plants e province were destroyed a the lack of rainfall.

for Western Visayas, Rabon- id that cloud-seeding opera- were done in Iloilo as early April and that more d-seeding would be conduct- ere soon.

response to the dry spell, officials of National Power Corp. would put to work more coal-fired power plants, he said.

Brownouts in Laguna

On Friday, at least four towns in Laguna experienced five hours without electricity, according to residents and an officer of the First Laguna Electric Cooperative (Fleco).

The towns affected were Paete, Pangil, Pakil and Kalayaan.

Gener Cadawas of Paete town said power failure in the area started at about 12 midnight on Friday. Power was restored at about 5 a.m. on Saturday.

Pangil resident Nhyll Baybay complained that power failure in the town was a regular occurrence, especially at night, resulting in the theft of electric wires in which her household was one of the victims.

"During the month of July, brownouts usually occur for more than five times; in June, brownouts are a regular occurrence also," she said. *With reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana and Romulo O. Ponte, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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- Joyce Reyes
Registered Nurse

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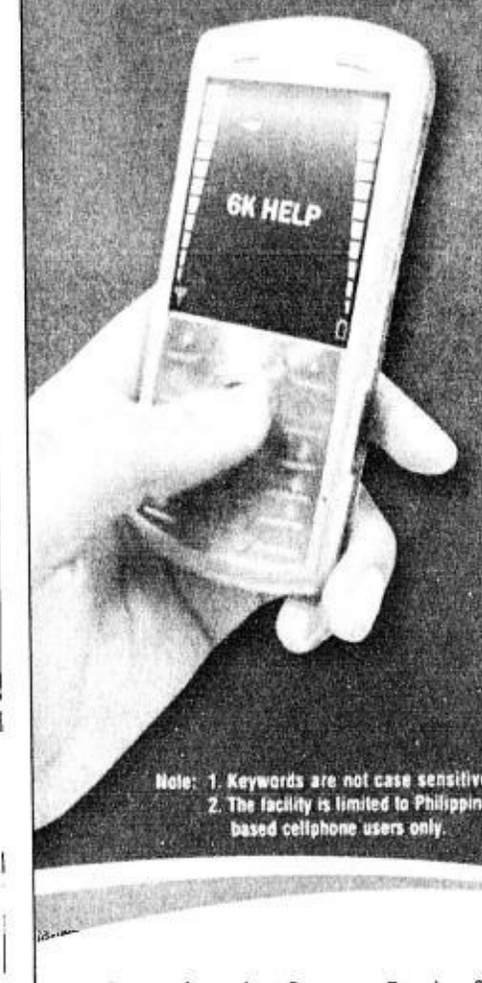

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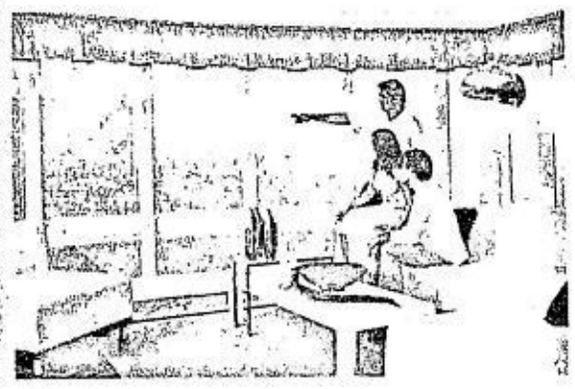

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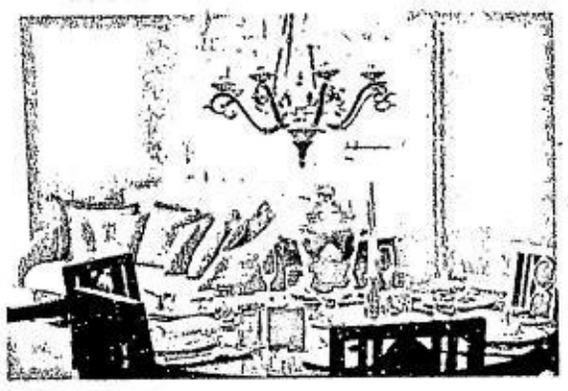

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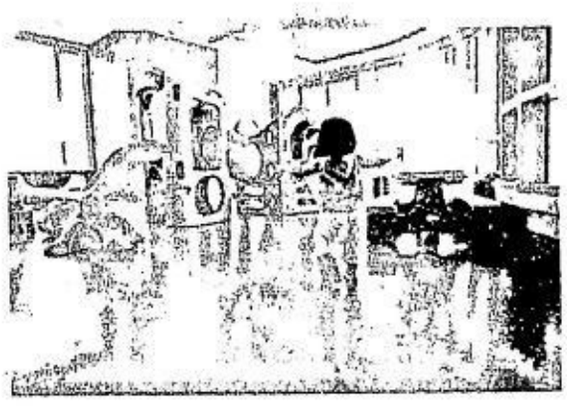

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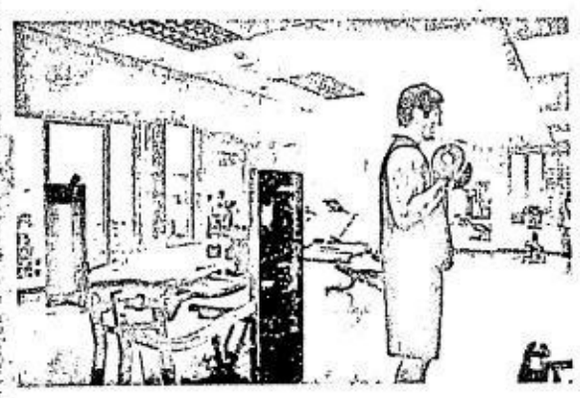

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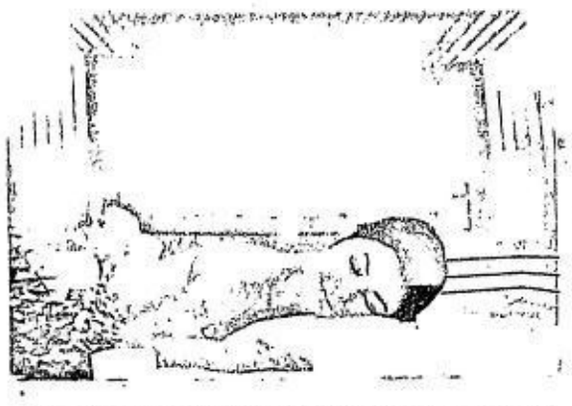

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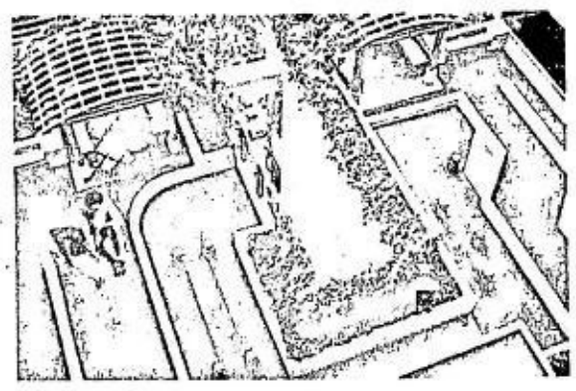

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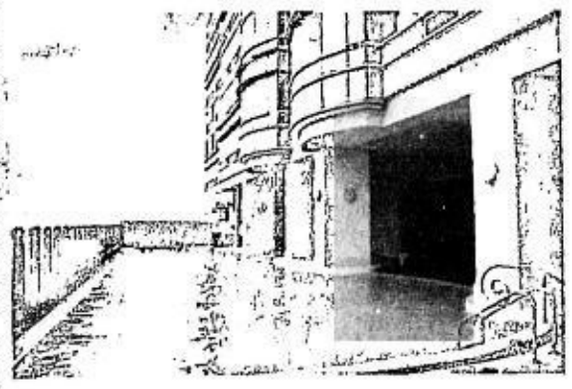

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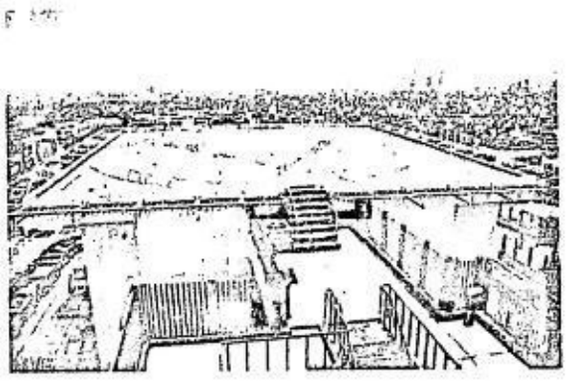

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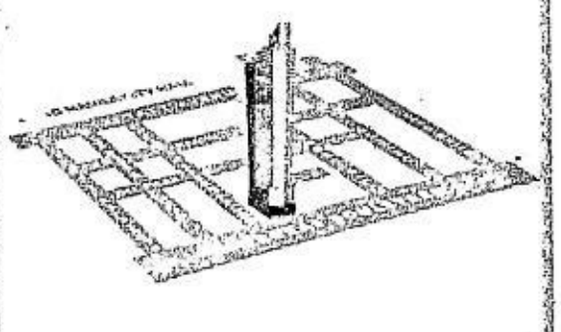

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Educating Gloria

EDITORIAL

IT DOESN'T ADD UP. THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri has been named "education czar" is like an equation missing a variable. The official line is that Neri's temporary transfer to the Commission on Higher Education this week is a sign of President Macapagal-Arroyo's resolve to fix worsening problems in the education sector. We think it is the exact opposite: It reflects, not the President's resolve, but her irresolution.

We do not question Neri's qualifications; aside from handling the economic planning and budget portfolios, he has also served as high-profile head of the Congressional Planning and Budget Office and, as he reminded reporters the other day, a professor at the Asian Institute of Management for 16 years. He also seems to have the President's ear, a not invaluable advantage for someone poised to shake up the government bureaucracy.

But all the same, his appointment raises more questions than it provides answers. Consider the following:

Earlier this month the President issued Executive Order 632, which created the position of a presidential assistant to "assess, plan and monitor the entire educational system." (Curiously, EO 632 is not immediately available online, from the otherwise impressive archive operated by the Office of the Press Secretary.) The new position has, naturally enough, been described as the office of a virtual education czar, but Neri insists he is not the new presidential assistant contemplated in the EO.

Neri says he has been asked to fix a specific problem, albeit one that has grown to crisis proportions. "We have too many unemployed college graduates," Neri said the other day, numbering "about one million." His task is to fix the "mismatch" between what the country's colleges graduate and what the country's companies employ. "We want to make sure the college graduates are matched with the requirements of the industry," he said.

This is an enormous—and necessary—undertaking; we are not sure, however, whether it is up to the CHEd to fix the problem. No doubt, the CHEd has a major role to play in reengineering the curriculum, for example, or in creating a program to turn entire colleges around, so that the degree programs they offer match the jobs available in the market. But what about the million college graduates who are already unemployed? They **are** the crisis; what can Neri, as CHEd chair, do for them?

Neri was named CHEd chair vice Carlito Puno, a long-time official who seems to have been completely left out of the loop. Reached by reporters last week, Puno refused to comment on Neri's impending takeover, saying the appointment papers had not been signed. Now the Arroyo administration is not exactly known for treating formerly useful appointees with the highest respect, but surely, if a new crisis in education does exist, shouldn't it have taken great care to ensure that an outgoing official did not, inadvertently, undermine the case it was making? As it is, the ruffled feathers and rush to publicity in Neri's new "special assignment" suggest the whole thing is just another politically motivated *rigodon*.

And if it is a crisis, isn't there anyone in the private sector, of sufficient stature and undeniable competence, who can help the President fix it? If education is truly one of the President's priorities, isn't it possible for her to recruit into the Cabinet a prominent personality who can serve, full time, as education czar? Indeed, instead of appointing the new presidential assistant for education, why not reconsolidate the functions of CHEd, the Department of Education and such agencies as Tesda under one office? If Education Secretary Jesli Lapus is doing a good job, why not get **him** to run the entire education sector?

Neri also says his transfer is merely temporary. "I have to go back after six months, hoping I can do my job properly," he said. Frankly, this sounds bizarre. If a crisis exists, how on earth can it be resolved by a troubleshooter with a six-month window of opportunity? Like we said: It doesn't add up.

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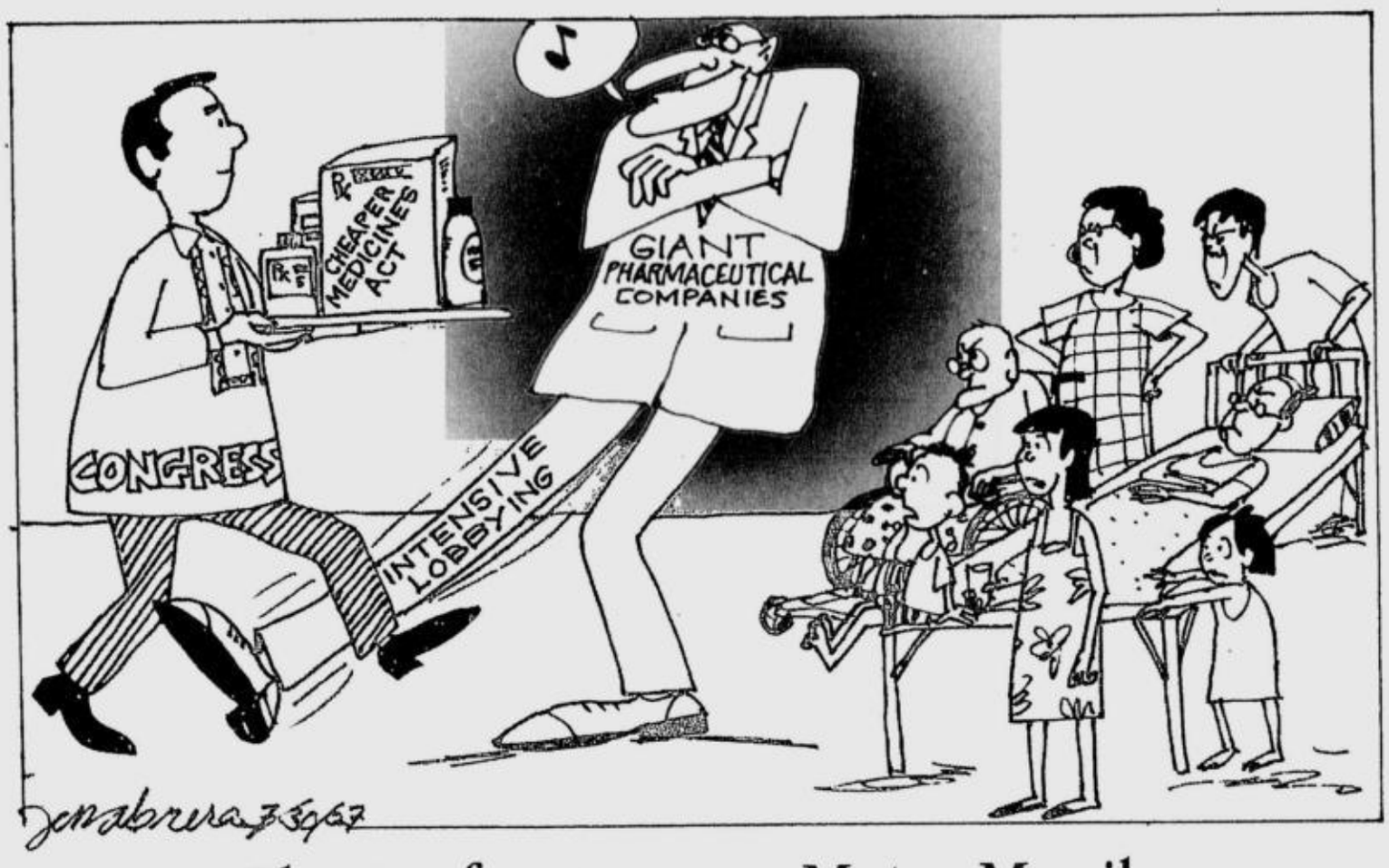


Plenty of water near Metro Manila

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE BROWNOUTS AND WATER SHORTAGE the country is now suffering from are a result of the inefficiency and negligence of the officials in the power sector. Didn't they know when the supply of coal for the generating plants would run out? Couldn't they have placed orders for more coal early enough? Couldn't they have provided for reserve supplies in case of late deliveries by exporters? *"Isang tambak silang gago."* They don't deserve the generous salaries and allowances taxpayers are paying them.

As for the officials in the water supply sector, didn't they know that the rains are late and that water in the reservoirs are below normal levels? They should have imposed mitigating measures, such as warning the public to conserve water early enough, to prevent a looming water shortage. Instead, they tried to hide their inefficiency by keeping the power and water shortages secret to the public. President Macapagal-Arroyo should have fired them instead of that hapless chief tax collector who collected excess revenues but was fired to cover up the shortcomings of his superior.

Doesn't the President find it ironic that Metro Manila, which is flooded after each heavy rain, is now, in the rainy season, short of drinking water? Water, water everywhere, but only a few drops to drink.

And doesn't she know that Metro Manila need not suffer from a water shortage every summer if only her officials are doing their jobs? There is plenty of water to augment the supply from Angat Dam which runs short every year. I've written about this from time to time for the last 14 years that I sound like a broken record, but I'm not joking. There is plenty of water near Metro Manila just waiting to be tapped.

This water is impounded behind the Wawa Dam in Rodriguez (formerly Montalban). Wawa Dam used to be the main source of water for Manila but it was abandoned after the completion of the bigger Angat Dam. But now the supply from Angat is no longer enough and the Wawa Dam is still there collecting water behind it. It is just a stone's throw from La Mesa Dam. All that is needed is to connect a few kilometers of new pipes from Wawa to La Mesa.

A water development firm, the San Lorenzo Ruiz Development Corp., a partner in the construction of the Casecnan Dam, has offered to harness Wawa for Metro Manila—at no cost to the government. But this is the mystery: The National Water Resources Board (NWRB) refuses to grant San Lorenzo the authority to do that. It has been sitting on its application for the last 14 years! The Philippines is notorious for its notoriously long red tape, but 14 years for an urgent project is too much. It merits a place in the Guinness Book of World Records.

The NWRB refuses to say why it is sitting on the application either. It just sits there doing nothing as if the application and the recurrent water shortages don't exist. This is the big mystery. Why is the NWRB doing this even when the project is urgently needed, even when the government is not going to spend a single centavo for it?

I asked the NWRB this question a few times in the past but I never got a satisfactory answer.

Will the President please ask the NWRB for an explanation? Maybe it will be forced to give an honest answer. Or doesn't she care a hoot about Metro Manila's water supply? This and her act indirectly allowing a bunch of opportunists to make a lot of money by constructing a housing project inside the La Mesa watershed and therefore polluting the water supply point to her lack of concern for the welfare of Metro Manilans. Is it because she lost in Metro Manila in the last two or three elections?

If the NWRB doesn't like San Lorenzo, why doesn't it reject its application and turn to another developer? Apparently, it cannot do this without risking a lawsuit. For the law says that the first applicant to develop a water resource should get the contract. And San Lorenzo, by law, is entitled to the project.

Maybe the NWRB really wants to give it to another developer, such as the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS). But the MWSS has already abandoned Wawa and the law says that an entity that abandons a water project can no longer get it back. That is only fair.

So the NWRB is really in a bind. If it gives the project to the MWSS or any other developer, San Lorenzo will surely sue it and demand millions of pesos in damages. So what it is probably doing is to sit on San Lorenzo's application so that it will tire of waiting and abandon the project, and give it a reason to award the project to another developer.

But in doing so, it is punishing the residents of Metro Manila who suffer from thirst every summer. Not only those who already have water connections but have little water flowing out of their faucets, but also those communities who are denied water facilities—such as the communities in Parañaque, Las Piñas and Muntinlupa—because there is not enough water to supply them.

With the harnessing of Wawa, it can also supply communities in Rizal without water connections at present, and farms in Bulacan that have no irrigation water. If only the NWRB will get off its ass and make a decision.

Meanwhile, for every day that the NWRB does nothing, millions of gallons of water sorely needed by millions of people go over the dam at Wawa, flow down the Marikina and Pasig rivers and go to waste in Manila Bay. In the last 14 years, we have probably lost enough water to float the whole of Metro Manila.

The water that goes over the dam, by the way, is the same water that floods the lower areas of Metro Manila as it flows down the two rivers on the way to the sea. If the Wawa Dam is harnessed, therefore, flooding in the metropolis would be lessened.

Modest proposals

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

ANTERO JUNIA JR. OF CALUBIAN, LEYTE, has a brilliant proposal, which came out in Letters last week. He proposes that elections be scrapped altogether and that positions be held out for bidding. Instead of a Comelec that will miscount the votes anyway, we can have a Committee on Bids and Awards, composed of officials from the Bureau of Treasury and the Commission on Audit, receiving sealed bids in cashier's check in whatever recognized currency.

"For the 12 senators, for example, the 12 highest bidders will be declared winners, their money duly receipted and turned over to the Treasury's general fund. As for the losers, their money will be returned but less 15 percent for administrative charges."

I agree wholeheartedly and wonder why I didn't think of it myself. I'm now convinced *bahalina*, the Warays' favorite drink, inspires genius. Junia's proposal, as he himself points out, has the virtue of eliminating the liquor ban, the gun ban, and the ban on excessive campaign expenditure and outsized posters. One can easily add to its virtues. It can curb corruption by stopping the commissioners of the Commission on Elections from making commission on elections, it will add to the nation's coffers (I myself propose that the losers' money not be returned to discourage nuisance bidders), it will spare the public school teachers added work and risks, it will reduce the electoral slaughter (though that isn't always a virtue), and it will cut to the chase. Elective positions are for sale anyway, why not put some order into the trade?

Seemingly an exercise in pushing things to their absurd lengths, it is in fact perfectly reasonable compared to some of the truly absurd, indeed mind-boggling, things the Comelec and many candidates have actually proposed and/or done to elections. It's like the Eraptions: The only gaffes, malapropisms, and faux pas that are more out-of-this world than the Eraptions are the ones Erap actually committed. Such as leading the countdown to the third millennium Anno Domini by counting 10, 11, 12... instead of 10, 9, 8.... By the same token, the only thing more cutting than Junia's satirical barb is reality's cruel sting.

Which is really more laughable, auctioning public office or making Miguel Zubiri senator on the strength of the Maguindanao votes? Which is really a bigger lapse of sanity, selling public positions, including the presidency, to the highest bidder or selling the "Hello Garci" tape as a lapse of judgment? The latter are far more epic absurdities, yet we take them with a serious face, or at least a blank one.

Junia's proposal, for all its farcical gleefulness, raises one perfectly solemn and important question, which is: Do we really still want elections? Or, probably more to the point, do we really still need elections?

That is not as facetious as it sounds. The only thing that has fallen more steeply over the years than the quality of this country's education is the quality of its elections. Cheating has been so factored in by the national consciousness it has become a veritable expectation. The Comelec itself is expected to cheat—that is now deemed to be its main function—the only question left to the public, or to the candidates who expect to be cheated, being how to stop it. Benjamin Abalos is the chief auctioneer of this country's public offices, or at least the chief overseer of the auction. The final decision for the awarding of the bid still rests with his boss.

We now have elections just for the sake of having elections, or for the sake of projecting the illusion we are still a democracy. More and more our elections have no visible connection to votes being counted. It's like that joke, *"may trabaho ka na nga, gusto mo pa ng sweldo?* (You already have a job, you still want to get paid?)" Here, it's *"may eleksyon ka na nga, gusto mo pa bilangin ang boto mo?* (You already have elections, you still want your vote counted?)"

What worries me about the future of elections, particularly the one in 2010, is not just the extent to which this is being accepted or tolerated but the extent to which this is being endorsed. Yes, endorsed, and not always tacitly. I still remember the fellow, presumably a Filipino living in the United States, who wrote in Letters, "So what if GMA cheated in 2004? Good for her, she prevented another Erap from becoming president." Or words to that effect. At least he had the decency to express that sentiment in black and white. I did hear exactly the same sentiment expressed by some people I knew (but who would later rue it) in private.

I heard the same sentiments again only recently about Zubiri's victory: He cheated? Good for him, he prevented another brewing dynasty, or a father-and-son tandem, in the Senate. Never has cheating taken on such regal robes.

All this time we've looked at military coups, or coup attempts, as the greatest threat to the Republic, or as the ultimate expression of illegitimate rule, and applaud Asean's effort to include a rejection of military coups in its charter, to be sworn to by its member-countries. But in this country at least, military coups are neither the greatest threat to the Republic nor the ultimate source of illegitimate rule. Elections are, or the kind overseen by the current Comelec. It is no exaggeration to say that this country has more to fear from the Comelec commissioners than from the Magdalo officers. Asean might want to add a clause that rejects electoral coups along with military ones, and binds the Philippines exclusively to it.

Or failing that, we could very seriously take Junio's farce to heart. Right now in our midst, the only thing stranger than fiction is truth, the only thing more absurd than absurdity is reality.

The Latin Mass

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

YOU MUST HAVE HEARD ABOUT THE REVIVAL of the Latin Mass recently announced by Pope Benedict XVI. Some former high school students of the Ateneo whom I have known from my years teaching Latin in the high school have asked me about it. They have fond memories of coming to the Jesuit Residence to serve early Mass and occasionally sneak a sip of Mompo before breakfast when no one was looking. The Masses were all in Latin, of course, and the young boys (some of them now prominent members of society) could give the responses even while dozing on their knees before the altar. Now some of them are asking if their sons or grandsons would also be reciting Ad Deum qui laetificat juventutem meam. And their wives have a different question: Will our daughters still be able to serve as readers during Mass and can women still distribute Communion? I did not have ready answers to their questions, so I decided to dig around with the help of the Internet.

The Latin Mass, of course, and its all-male liturgy all but disappeared from Philippine altars after Vatican II. It was all part of the liturgical reform at the time. The aim of the reform was to make the liturgy more meaningful for the Masses, thereby improving public worship. Later, however, a small but vocal group of Catholics began to call for a "reform of the reform." They found a champion and supporter in the future Benedict XVI who happened to believe that, noble as the intention of the Council was, the developments that followed were not achieving the goal. Hence, he issued the Apostolic Letter Summorum Pontificum. In a manner of speaking, Pope Benedict has formalized the "reform of the reform" to the dismay of many who have grown accustomed to today's liturgical practices.

The Apostolic Letter was something that did not come out of the blue. Apparently the Holy Father had been thinking about its contents even before he ascended to the papacy. While he was still cardinal he had already expressed displeasure with the manner in which the Vatican II liturgical reform was carried out. In various ways he expressed his support for the old liturgy. Thus it is said that it was his support which encouraged Pope John Paul II to come out with the original indult giving permission for the use of the old Tridentine rites. Apparently this was done against the wishes of almost all of the world's bishops, even if its professed aim was to reconcile traditionalist Catholics who were headed for schism under the leadership of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre.

It should be noted, however, that the Letter of Pope Benedict does not oblige. It only gives permission. Nor does it abolish current post-Vatican II practices. What the Letter does is give broad permission not only for the celebration of the Tridentine or Latin Mass but also for the use of pre-Vatican II liturgical rites for all the sacraments with the exception of ordination. The effect may well be the creation of two parallel liturgical practices within the Latin-rite Catholic Church, with one group worshipping according to the rites mandated by the Council of Trent and another mandated by Vatican II.

What are some of the highlights of the Apostolic Letter?

1. It permits the use of the Latin Roman Missal promulgated by Bl. John XXIII in 1962 in Masses celebrated without a congregation.

2. If religious communities wish to use the old liturgy habitually or permanently, the decision must be taken by their superiors in accordance with their own law. Such Masses may also be attended by others from outside.

3. In parishes where there is a stable group of faithful who adhere to the earlier liturgical tradition, the pastor should willingly accept their requests to celebrate the Mass according to the rite of the Roman Missal published in 1962, and ensure that the welfare of these faithful harmonizes with the ordinary pastoral care of the parish. If the people do not get satisfaction from their pastor, they should inform the bishop.

4. The Scripture readings may be in the vernacular.

5. The local bishop, if he feels it appropriate, may erect a "personal parish" for celebrations in accordance with the old liturgy or appoint a chaplain for the purpose.

The date given by the Pope for the Apostolic Letter to go into effect is September 14. As one blog says, "We await further guidance from the bishops on these matters. We also need to buy items unique to those types of Masses; financial donations towards this would be appreciated."

What our bishops will do remains to be seen. So far, to the best of my knowledge, there has been hardly any reaction from the Philippine Church even as it has invited open adverse reaction in other parts of the Catholic world. I myself do not anticipate a widespread public clamor for Latin Masses. For one, how many of our younger priests know Latin?

Shaping our Asean mindset

COMMENTARY

Natalia M.L.M. Morales

IT IS OFTEN SAID THAT FILIPINOS ARE ONE OF the most self–engrossed peoples in the world today. So much space in local and national news is devoted to what Filipino newsmakers—politicians, businessmen, technocrats, the military, clergy, the militant masses, rebels, cause-oriented groups—have to say and do. This explains our highly sensitive nature because we are always tuned into ourselves. This innocent narcissism stems from our ongoing search for national identity. An identity crisis makes up a big chunk of our national crisis. One Latin American diplomat notes the limited range of views he reads in Philippine news. Despite scores of writers and columnists, many come from the same side of the discourse coin, and the issues currency isn't that varied either.

The nation-state paradigm is heavy on our national psyche. The failure to rise beyond the nation-state concept can be debilitating—a serious flaw in our civic culture. In a global world, the nation could be absorbed into an entity larger than itself. This is the lesson that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) can bring us. Mold Asean into the Filipino consciousness we must.

On August 8, Asean will mark its 40th Anniversary since its founding in 1967. Aside from the Asean Ministerial Meeting and the series of post-ministerial meetings, all of which the Philippines hosts, there is very little that will imprint the country's spirit and primary role as chair during these benchmark events. The embers from the coverage of the 12th Asean Summit held in Cebu City last January are sputtering out. True, media supplements on Asean are ubiquitous these days, but as a matter of occasion, not a set course. Advance promotional blurbs on these events are limited and evident only right on or near the target meeting dates.

There is no regular Asean habit of mind in our shores. One has to seek special website editions to know what's happening and what the official support the Asean program requires and deserves from us. The recent postcard-sending campaign of the Departments of Education and Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with Asean embassies, partly addressed this lack of Asean awareness among Filipino youth.

Indeed, how Asean fares in the Filipino mind is decidedly different. Other Asean countries make use of standard media fare to show how important the regional association is to them. Short of what Kenichi Ohmae calls the "region-state," Asean has tried many routes—economic, security, socio-cultural—to reach its goal. Region-state may be a tentative concept for what Asean is at the moment. But to the concept's credit is a greater vision, of resources and the promise of well-being for both leaders and citizens. Political actors, in short, must know how to work for Asean ideals and dynamics.

The Philippines, it is observed, lags behind newer Asean states in commanding the regional vision for whatever will serve the national interest. Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos follow more venerable, senior Asean members in shaping their citizens to think of themselves not only as Khmers, Burmese or Laotians, but more importantly as Asean nationals. How inspiring to find lanes in their airports reserved for Asean countries rather than impersonal and blunt signs for "foreigners" or "migrant workers." Unfortunately for the Philippines, our government is prompter in sorting out air passengers along the parameters of disease control (SARS, avian flu, HIV-Aids) or as terrorist suspects than as Asean persons. The same can be said about the mental space media provides for foreign policy issues—powerful bilateral and multilateral topics that link us to America, Europe, the other developing states are often lead news. But Asean is treated with an undeserved vagueness and is seen more as subsidiary, rather than the central news itself. This ignores the major role of the Philippines in getting Asean started, back when Diosdado Macapagal proposed the creation of Maphilindo in 1963. The Philippine legacy in Asean is very rich but is not projected accordingly.

Asean at its best has been given an academic robe, its import a matter of occasion; even its 40th anniversary fails to resound in our people's consciousness. It is time for our poll bodies to maintain and contextualize an Asean consciousness report, in the Philippine scenario. Social Weather Stations did such a survey in 1997 and 2002. One must go beyond awareness of Asean countries as markets only for Philippine labor. Or could that be a good starting point for shaping the Asean mindset?

A regional community demands a higher level and quality of interaction that may not initially involve the common man. Asean is definitely understood and appreciated by political leaders and the economic elite who have the means to benefit from the regional process. The "trickle down" effect to the community could come later. Only a growing awareness of what the region means could hasten the spread of its benefits. Our diplomatic establishments in Asean countries sensibly don't let the embers just die, outside of summit events.

A recent visit to Phnom Penh alerted and involved us in the book donation campaign of Ambassador Lourdes Gutierrez-Morales to help the country re-build its "soul" and mark 50 years of Philippine-Cambodian diplomatic relations. Cambodia has a rich history and culture, symbolized in its treasured Angkor Wat. The visit touched us in more ways than one. Phnom Penh is now one of the Asean capitals proud of its Gawad Kalinga community built by Filipino expatriates there who are part of the Couples for Christ movement. The place of 20 or so Khmer families (former inhabitants of dumpsites) in the district of Cheoung Euk clearly shows the Philippine vision of "One Caring and Sharing Community" etched in the minds and hearts of the Cambodian people, despite the long-term impact of their "killing fields."

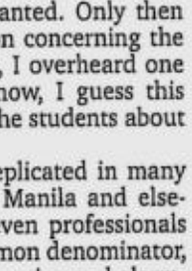
Asean's 40th anniversary can be marked more aptly if stories of how our people learn to help and bond with Asean peoples become part of daily discourse in the media and beyond.

Natalia M.L.M. Morales is vice president of the Philippine Council for Foreign Relations.

Communal political vocabulary wanted

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III



LAST WEEK I QUOTED LAWYER. EDWIN Lacierda, who pointed out that regardless of what one feels about our present President, we all owe the position itself a minimum of respect. Someone told me over the weekend that they'd overheard the President herself heartily agree with someone who told her the same thing: "Yes, respect for the position!" the President supposedly said. I'd add, respect for the position, regardless of how one feels about the holder of that position—including whether one believes that position is held legitimately or illegitimately. After all, until someone else occupies it, there's only one person serving as president.

But we aren't in Thailand, which has a monarch and laws to ensure no one insults the king (who is generally either respected or loved). What we should do, for example, is politely rise when the President enters and leaves the room; but during her speech, we're free to heckle her, if we want to. We're also free not to attend events in which she'll appear, or to take our protests outside.

There's a larger problem I'd like to point out, however. Whether it's the President, our other officials (on either side of the political fence), or any group trying to make its presence felt in our political life, you'll often hear them complaining that they're unable to motivate people. Then you hear the citizenry justifying its lack of interest in anything political by saying it doesn't believe anyone, and so doesn't care, and thus, doesn't move. The result? If anything happens at all, people lose their enthusiasm quickly and the cynicism just gets deeper.

The reason for this, and therefore the problem, is: we have lost a common political vocabulary. Put another way, there are certain words that used to have meaning; now, those words have lost all meaning. And yet, those tasked, either by election or because they're inclined to participate in politics, know no other words to describe what they're doing and why what they're doing is supposed to matter.

Here's a concrete example. Last year, when the debate on constitutional amendments had heated up, and groups either pro or con had begun reaching out to the public to drum up support for their causes, I was invited to a symposium held by a group of Catholic colleges. I was given a couple of hours to make a presentation of the One Voice position on Charter change. As I usually do when I begin a talk, I polled the students on what they knew about the controversy at hand, and how they understood government and its workings. Some students countered by asking me questions, such as, what does Congress do? How does the judiciary function? What is the president's job?

Instead of going straight into my presentation, I ended up having to give the students a crash course on what a constitution is; what it provides for; how our government is organized, and what its component parts do; and certain key concepts such as checks and balances. I then had to try to describe what other groups wanted. Only then could I go into my presentation concerning the side I belonged to. Afterwards, I overheard one educator tell another, "You know, I guess this means we should be teaching the students about the Constitution."

This experience has been replicated in many places I've gone to, in Metro Manila and elsewhere, among students and even professionals from all walks of life. The common denominator, then, when it comes to this pervasive and alarming ignorance is not economic status, and not educational attainment (the audiences I address are either in, or have finished, college) but more along the lines of a generation gap. Now what separates one generation from the next is, however, education, or to be more precise, culture. I've noticed that if I talk to people in their mid- to late 30s or older, I am more likely to encounter a shared familiarity with certain political concepts, and a wider agreement on, and use of, a shared political vocabulary. Then all of a sudden, for people in their early 30s and below, the political vocabulary loses all meaning.

When did this happen? It seems to me, it happened at no particular point, but instead, is the result of a confluence of events.

The sacrifices and heroism of the war stopped having any meaning when Diosdado Macapagal recognized the 2nd Republic, something a previous Congress and President who'd approved an amnesty for those accused of treason during the Japanese Occupation, did not do. The sacrifices of martial law stopped having any meaning when the Marcoses came home to be wined and dined instead of being lined up against the wall; the heroism of Edsa I and the enthusiasms of Edsa II stopped having meaning between the signing of the Impsa deal and Edsa Tres.

So when someone of a certain age, and most of our leaders and those active in political circles are of a certain age or above, talks about "freedom," or "democracy," refers to "liberty," and tries to refer to "people power" or "checks and balances" as good or bad things, wants to appeal to "nationalism," or uphold "human rights," refers to "martial law," it goes straight over the heads of younger Filipinos. They are familiar with the words, but no longer give those words the meaning, and thus, the power, Filipinos from older generations not only assume, but genuinely feel.

Culture, if it's to survive, has to be consciously transmitted. Once the transmission of culture fails to take place, culture dies. Politics has a culture all its own. The 1960s saw an old political culture fail to renew itself, but refusing to die, either; and what was new, then, is old and just as sterile, today. It's as if you erased an old computer program and replaced with a new one full of viruses. The result is the dysfunctional, and sterile, political culture we see today.

Grand Old Man of the Philippine Navy

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

IN 1927, JOSE FRANCISCO WAS A 17-YEAR-OLD STUDENT at the Manila South High School. After topping both the civil service and qualifying tests for the US Naval Academy, he left for America aboard an Army transport vessel, the USS Thomas, the same ship that brought to the Philippines the American school teachers who would be collectively known as the Thomasites. The young boy had no travel documents, no passport, no visa. All he carried with him was a letter of appointment signed by the governor general and a safe conduct pass.

At that time, the purpose of sending scholars to Annapolis and West Point was to produce Filipino officers for the Philippine Scouts. We had no Navy to speak of.

Unfortunately the Great Depression resulting from the stock market crash in 1929 left no money for commissioning a young Annapolis graduate and so in 1931 after his graduation, he found himself jobless. Strangely enough, his counterpart at West Point, Rufo Romero, who was later convicted of selling Bataan maps to Japanese intelligence, was commissioned immediately in the Philippine Scouts.

Francisco returned home a civilian with only an Annapolis diploma in his hand. He joined the Lopez-owned Iloilo Negros Air Express more as a mechanic because of his background with airplane engines as a midshipman. After a while, he began to have flying lessons and soon piled up 90 flying hours, one half of which were solo.

After three years with Iloilo Air Express, he joined the air section of the Philippine Constabulary and was sent to Randolph Field in Texas for formal flying training. He became the first Filipino to graduate from the US Army Air Corps Training Center in Randolph. Returning home in 1937, he served as a flight instructor with the Philippine Army Air Corps (PAAC) Flying School. It was here that he met a Maj. Dwight Eisenhower, chief of staff of Douglas MacArthur, and after a while he became Ike's regular instructor as the American pilots were often not available. Their relationship became so close that at times Ike would confide in him about his policy differences with MacArthur which to Francisco meant his impending relief and return to the United States.

After World War II, he rejoined his old unit at PAAC, but later was enticed to serve in the Offshore Patrol. Fourteen years after graduating from Annapolis, he was finally in a naval organization.

The Offshore Patrol became the Philippine Naval Patrol (PNP); in 1951, the PNP was re-designated the Philippine Navy. As head of the organization, Francisco was promoted to the rank of commodore and became the first flag Officer in command (FOIC) of the Philippine Navy. In a conversation with the Commodore, he related the following story: One of the minor issues facing the Navy at that time was the proper title for its commander. With the promotion of Francisco to flag rank, the most logical designation would have been flag officer commanding (FOC) but Francisco was not too happy with the initials so he tasked his chief of personnel, Capt. Quirico Evangelista, who incidentally composed the alma mater song of the PMA, to come up with some other ideas for the position. Evangelista found out that in Singapore the No. 2 man in the British Navy Headquarters carried the title flag officer second in command (FOSIC) and suggested something similar—flag officer in command (FOIC) for the Philippine Navy. Francisco readily agreed to the recommendation and to this day the chief of the Navy is known as FOIC.

In 1957 Gen. Alfonso Arellano was the AFP chief of staff. Jose Francisco was the most senior service commander and when Arellano left for Australia with Vice President Carlos Garcia, Francisco was designated acting chief of staff. Earlier, he had been informed by Defense Secretary Eulogio Balao that President Ramon Magsaysay had already decided on his designation as the new chief of staff upon the retirement of Arellano.

Unfortunately, with the death of Magsaysay in Cebu and the assumption to the presidency of Carlos Garcia, events in the AFP took a different turn. Gen. Manuel Cabal, the PC chief who was junior to Francisco, was elevated to chief of staff succeeding Arellano and the Navy lost its chance to fill up the C/S AFP position. Francisco did not venture any explanation for the bypass. When I asked him what his greatest disappointment in life was, he was silent for a few moments after which he replied, "The golf course always wins." I took it to mean that someone else decides our fate and there is not much one can do about it.

Last week, Commodore Jose Francisco passed away just five days short of his 98th birthday.

Somehow I am reminded of a line from the novel "Don Quixote" by the great Spanish writer and poet Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra. "There is a strange charm in the thoughts of a good legacy which wondrously removes or at least alleviates the sorrows that men would otherwise feel for the death of friends."

What then has been the legacy of Jose Samosa Francisco? He left behind a strong and modern naval organization. It was during his term that significant changes were made in the organizational structure of the Philippine Navy with the creation of the Naval Training Command and the Naval Operating Forces which became the source of many future FOICs. He established the Philippine Marines with the activation of the First Marine Company, which became the nucleus of the present-day Marine Corps, one of two elite fighting units of the AFP. He nationalized practices in the naval command using the names of provinces, inland waterways, and ethnic regions to replace the code numbers of navy ships. So we had, for instance, RPS Cotabato, which stood for "Republic of the Philippines Ship" Cotabato. During his watch, the Navy got its combat pay, specialist pay, hazardous duty pay, sea duty and flying pay along with other benefits which greatly improved Navy morale.

The other legacy for which he will be remembered was his strong conviction regarding duty, honor and country. He stressed: You follow orders from your superior officer, you give your word and stick by it and you put the country before the individual.

But more than anything else, his greatest legacy to the nation and to his family in particular will be a respected name untarnished by scandal or by any hint of impropriety. He was the Grand Old Man of the Philippine Navy—its longest serving chief. The entire AFP mourns his passing.

THEY SAID

Special treatment

"He has practically abused the leniency and magnanimity of the government by asking for approbation of request to attend gatherings or social events which other detention prisoners could not avail of."

—Prosecutors Dennis Villa-Ignacio and Robert Kallos, opposing deposed President Joseph Estrada's requests to attend social events

Last Sona set a bad trend

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S SEventh State of the Nation Address lasted 56 minutes and was interrupted 106 times by loud, and sometimes mechanical, applause from the *hakot* crowd. On Commonwealth Avenue, 7,000 protesters held an alternative Sona.

The President gave an update on road networks, power plants, disaster mitigation measures, transport hubs, etc. being built or introduced. She cited the cost of these projects, the number of beneficiaries and the magnitude of local investments. She also cited statistics on foreign investments, business ventures, education funding, health care, housing, corruption and job generation. She even mentioned that the antiterror law was first filed "three years after the first World Trade Center bombing, four years before the Rizal Day bombing and five years before 9/11."

Numbers can easily confound the inattentive and impress the naive. Ms Arroyo, the economist, loaded her speech with "safe" numerical figures to stupefy the crowd into thinking that her government is doing more than enough and deserves to remain in power until and maybe even beyond 2010. But she failed to cite damning, but accurate and relevant, statistics.

For example, the statistics on child malnutrition, school dropouts, math and science national proficiency, quality of health care, access to medical practitioners; on houses demolished to give way to mega projects; on bribe money collected from investors; on smuggling and the illegal drug trade and *jueteng*; on torture victims, illegal arrests, forced disappearances, violent dispersals and impunity killings; on how much was paid to Lintang Bedol and company; on election-related murders.

For every figure GMA cited, there was a corresponding shameful statistic which she refused to mention.

GMA devoted a section of her speech to "terrorism and human rights." But she didn't cite a single numerical figure of her government's record to uphold human rights. How many killers have been convicted and punished? How many military officials have been suspended for failing to stop political killings? How many witnesses have been given protection?

GMA identified the tiniest roads and bridges her government is building, yet she could not boast of one political killing that had been solved.

Many waited to hear the President expound on the P125-wage hike proposal, P3,000 salary increase for government workers, oil price rollback, tuition regulation, debt audit. These are some of the numbers and issues which GMA could have discussed in the recent Sona. Instead, she displayed her knowledge of Philippine geography and numerical proficiency, and her adeptness at name recall.

But the Sona should be more than just a report card on government's achievements. The Sona should inspire the people, arouse their interest in governance and mobilize them for political goals. GMA's Sona set a bad trend.

—RAYMOND PALATINO,
president, Kabataan Party List,
mongpalatino@gmail.com

LETTERS TO THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BJMP has no authority over provincial jails

THIS REFERS TO A NEWS ITEM TITLED "4 Sayyaf men bolt Basilan jail after release of Bossi," written by Julie Alipala and Alcuin Papa. (INQUIRER, 7/21/07)

In the last paragraph, the report made an erroneous allusion to the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) as the agency that supervises all provincial jails. The mistake has yet again put the BJMP in a bad light in the eyes of millions of INQUIRER readers.

Provincial jails are under the supervision of their respective provincial governments and the BJMP supervises only the municipal, city and district jails.

—MICHELLE NG-BONTO,
inspector, JMP,
officer in charge, Community Relations Service/Legislative Liaison Officer,
Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, Juco Bldg.,
144 Mindanao Ave., Project 8, QC

So what if no Speaker was elected in time?

I STILL FEEL GUTTED ABOUT THE deaths and mutilation of 10 Marines and an imam. As a child, I was an army brat living among the Moros in Cotabato in the '60s. My father was a finance officer of the Philippine Army's engineering brigade which built roads and bridges in Mindanao.

So when I saw in bold type "Speakerless House feared" (INQUIRER, 7/20/07), I thought "Who cares?" Only Jose de Venecia and Pablo Garcia and their voracious minions. I could imagine them taking in news of the catastrophe with the flicker of a thought for the sufferers, then moving on to the squalid brawling and scheming for the speakership.

So if there had been no speaker on July 23, I wouldn't have rued President Macapagal-Arroyo's failure to deliver her State of the Nation Address.

—ELEANOR P. POPPLE,
Bonifacio Ridge,
1401 Spanish Bay,
Fort Bonifacio
Global City, Taguig City

True cause of poor S&T

JULY IS SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY MONTH. This year's 29th Annual Scientific Meeting has the theme "A Progressive Philippines Anchored on Science: Building a Culture of Science in the Philippines." The yearly celebration includes exhibits of the country's accomplishments, and awards ceremonies that recognize outstanding achievements in science and technology (S&T). Our progress in these fields is important to economic transformation.

The government agency tasked to develop S&T is the Department of Science and Technology, which launched the Science and Technology Master Plan 1990-2000. Its 1991 budget doubled to P1.7 billion in 1992, went up to P2.4 billion in 1993, and to P3.2 billion in 1995.

But between 1981 and 1995, among seven nations in the region—Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines—we had the least progress in S&T.

The reason for this poor performance: Our use of peer judgment and expert opinion (of which we do not have enough) to measure performance and progress in S&T, when our neighbor-countries have been using the established indicator—the number of publications in international peer-reviewed journals.

In August 1995, a science magazine, using international peer-reviewed publications, ranked the Philippines' S&T performance a poor 60th in the world.

Despite its poor S&T performance in 1981-1995, the Philippines placed a 33-page advertisement in the Scientific American in February 1996, claiming pioneering efforts in metals technology, materials science, electronics, information technology, "and, most especially, biotechnology." The advertisement must have cost the country millions of pesos and worldwide embarrassment. Resorting to publicity and claims of achievements does not replace performance.

What brought about our low publications output? The highest science organization in the country is the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST). It is mandated "to advise the President and the Cabinet on matters related to science and technology." Hence, it is mainly responsible for the DOST's administration of science in the Philippines. Why has it failed?

Both questions can be explained by looking at its members' scientific publications, the most important indicator of being a scientist. Ten of our most outstanding scientists are NAST members, but only 16 of its 50 members in 1998 had publications between 1981 and 1997. For a national science academy, this profile is very sad.

With its membership dominated by unpublished or poorly published members, it can hardly be expected to carry out its mandated functions. Hence, the NAST is the main cause of the country's poor S&T, on which depends national progress. Why has this most important problem of membership not been addressed in its many annual scientific meetings?

—FLOR LACANILAO,
retired professor of marine science,
flor_lacanilao@yahoo.com

'Give Atienza a chance'

THE WELTER OF CRITICISMS THAT MET THE appointment of former Manila Mayor Lito Atienza as environment secretary is not fair. I believe the environmental NGOs should give him a fair chance to prove himself in the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, then judge him on the basis of his actions as secretary, instead of revisiting old disputes.

Atienza was an activist who fought President Ferdinand Marcos during the dictatorship. And he did pretty well as mayor of Manila. Except for the fact that he has less than three years to do the job of environment secretary, he should have an even chance of succeeding in this new mandate.

From experience, I know that the problems of our environment are quite challenging. Our best chance of success is for the government, business, the NGO sector and the general citizenry to work together toward common goals. Perhaps we should all dedicate ourselves to defining what these goals should be, rather than weakening each other with harsh words and ill-defined suspicions.

—FULGENCIO FACTORAN JR.,
7/F Montepino Bldg.,
Adelantado cor. Gamboa Streets,
Legaspi Village, Makati City

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Thank you, Secretary Angie Reyes

As major stakeholders of the sector under the wing of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), we wish to express our gratitude to Secretary Angelo T. Reyes for steering the DENR along an energetic, inclusive and transparent path these past 17 months.

Approaching his job as chief steward of the nation's environmental health and natural wealth with a refreshing vision and sense of urgency, Secretary Reyes has actively engaged the entire sector in pursuit of common goals. He has combined a personal openness to learn on the job with an aggressive social mobilization strategy to get things done. By rightfully sharing the DENR's stewardship responsibilities with other stakeholders, he has enabled the agency to focus on its core technical competencies, while empowering allied groups to raise levels of public awareness and action on the sector's critical issues.

Secretary Reyes has shown a unique capacity to balance perspectives and to bring diverse and oftentimes, conflicting groups and individuals together to resolve thorny problems and to initiate environmental programs that would best promote the national interest. On the other hand, when his intervention is needed to break an impasse involving distinct stakeholders, he does not shirk from making the hard decision and taking the flak for it.

In sum, his favorite refrain - "Let us focus on causes that unite, rather than on issues that divide" - has animated his passion for action and his commitment to serve the Filipino people. It is unfortunate that Secretary Reyes is being replaced at the helm of the DENR just when the good programs he has initiated are gathering momentum on multiple fronts. His style of leadership will be sorely missed by our sector but will remain a source of inspiration to us all.

Ambassador Francis Chua
Federation of Filipino-Chinese
Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Inc.

Antonio G. Bernas
Chairman Emeritus
Philippine Wood Producers Association

Antonio C. Olizon
Chairman
Philippine Wood Producers Association

Edgar O. Chua
Chairman
Philippine Business for the Envrionment

Fernando A. Lu
President
Philippine Wood Producers Association

John Tan
President
Federation of Filipino-Chinese
Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Inc.

Jesus L. Arranza
President
Federation of Philippine Industries

Dr. Rene Azurin
Secretary General
Green Army Philippines Network Foundation, Inc.

Teresita B. Choa
National President
Girl Scouts of the Philippines

John C. Kaw
Assistant to the President
Peace and Order and Environmental Concerns
Federation of Filipino-Chinese
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Odette Alcantara
Convenor
Mother Earth Philippines

Dr. Corazon Claudio
Head
Earth Institute of Asia

Elizea G. Gozun
Chairman
Earth Day Network Philippines

Renato A. De Rueda
National Coordinator
Couples for Christ • OIKOS Society

Dr. Ben Malayang III
President
Silliman University

Thaddeus Anthony L. Tan
President
Junior Chamber International Philippines
Manila

Antonio R. Santos
Mindanao Business Council

Richard D. Valdes
Past National President
REACT Philippines, Inc.

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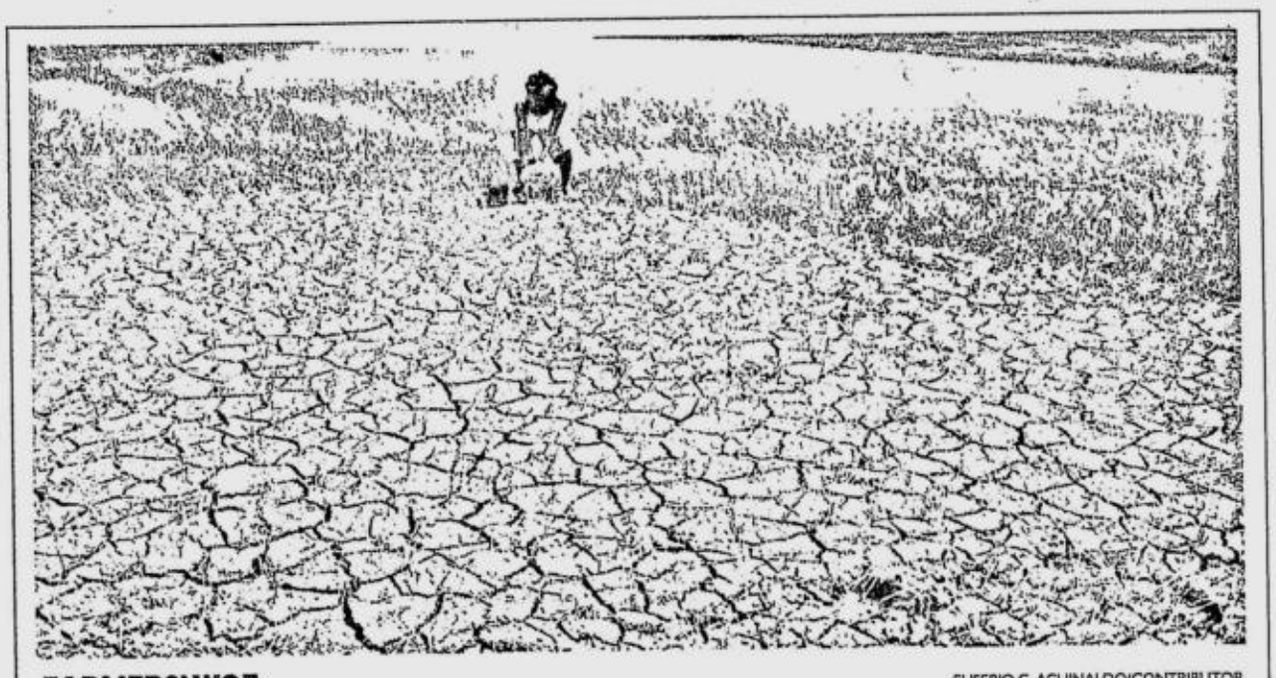
GMA steps into row over Subic-Clark



FARMERS' WOE EUSEBIO G. AGUINALDO/CONTRIBUTOR

A farmer in Barangay Dallangayan, San Fernando City in La Union inspect his riceland affected by the drought in Ilocos Region.

CLARK FREEPORT—PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO HAS APproved the recommendation of Secretary Edgardo Pamintuan to give a Japanese contractor at least four months more to finish the Bataan-Pampanga portion of the national flagship project Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway in Central Luzon.

Ms Arroyo's approval was contained in a confidential July 25 memorandum, a copy given by a Malacañang source to the INQUIRER showed.

Pamintuan, chair of the Subic-Clark Alliance for Development Council and Luzon Urban Beltway super region, confirmed on Friday Ms Arroyo's approval of his recommendation to extend the deadline of the Kajima Corp., Obayashi Corp., JFE Engineering Corp. and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd. (KOJM) Joint Venture starting Nov. 15.

"She has officially approved the deadline extension, which she has initially announced during the LUB conference in Subic on July 19," Pamintuan said.

In approving it, Ms Arroyo ended the negotiations between the Bases Conversion Development Authority and the KOJM. The talks, which began in April when KOJM first sought a 383-day extension, had dragged for three months.

Pamintuan said the BCDA would have to "take action now."

The recommendation said the extension would have "no direct cost to the government"—a term that kept up with the BCDA's position.

Asked if the government would start penalizing the KOJM with at least P5.3 million for every day of delay as stated in the contract, Pamintuan said: "My understanding is that they will not be penalized, only after the expiration of the four-month extension."

"By granting the four-month extension, KOJM's completion date is adjusted, current negative slippage is eliminated. No liquidated damages to be charged," he said.

The KOJM has worked to bring its slippage or the delay in the work schedule to below 15 percent in the 50-km side of the 94-km toll road, it was learned.

The BCDA has required the KOJM to submit a detailed work plan for the four-month deadline extension it requested three weeks ago.

The relief of KOJM project manager, Masato Otsubo, which international consultants have recommended, has been "withdrawn," it was learned.

Talks for deadline extensions began when the KOJM and the other Japanese contractor, the Hazama-Taisei-Nippon Steel (HTN) Joint Venture, reported incurring 2,408 and 457 days of delay, respectively, due mainly to right-of-way problems or access to sites on which the P21-billion Japanese-funded highway would be built.

INQUIRER sources said the project went awry when some BCDA officials connived with real estate brokers to increase the prices of land and as other BCDA executives allegedly mulcted the two major contractors and their Filipino sub-contractors.

According to the original contract, the HTN is supposed to finish the 44-km Pampanga-Tarlac side in August this year. The KOJM's adjusted deadline will be in March next year.

The BCDA has been reviewing its terms of reference for a third bidding for the operations and management of the toll way.

BCDA president Narciso Abaya said the agency would not operate and manage the toll way, contrary to the apprehension of the multi-sectoral group, Advocacy for the Development of Central Luzon.

"We are also exploring an interim arrangement for a third party to operate in case the third bidding is not finished before the scheduled opening. But the operations and management will be privatized," Abaya told the INQUIRER last week.

"We just want to be sure that we maximize our revenues from the toll expressway. After all it is the BCDA that will pay for the loan used to finance this project," Abaya said.

Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon

Dengue kills 2, downs 255 in N. Samar town

By Joey A. Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—THE DEPARTMENT of Health in Eastern Visayas has reported an outbreak of dengue fever in Pambujan town, Northern Samar, killing two children and afflicting 255 others since early this month.

Boyd Cerro, regional sentinel nurse, said the two children, ages 5 and 7, were residents of two different villages of Pambujan, a fourth-class town about 297 kilometers from here.

Cerro said the older girl died on July 12 while the 5-year-old girl died Tuesday.

Cerro said the spread of dengue cases in the town was first noticed on July 3 with a single case but it quickly increased in the succeeding days.

Last July 25 alone, 24 persons were admitted to the Provincial General Hospital in Catarman, Cerro said.

Four of the town's 26 villages, all located in the town proper, have dengue cases, he said.

"We can say that there is really an outbreak of dengue fever in Pambujan considering that four of its villages have reported cases of dengue," Cerro, reached on his mobile phone, told the INQUIRER Saturday.

Cerro said that he, together with Dr. Adelfo Labnao, program coordinator on dengue fever of DOH-8, left for Pambujan last Wednesday to monitor the situation and brought along with them some intravenous fluids and medicines to be given to the victims.

The 255 cases in Pambujan did not include the 197 dengue cases in Eastern Visayas recorded by the regional health office from January to July 21 this year.

Based on the records of the DOH-8, Leyte has the highest number of dengue fever cases at 146, followed by Eastern Samar (24), Samar (15), Southern Leyte (6), Biliran (5) and Northern Samar (1).

Last year, the region had 355 dengue cases with one fatality.

Government Warning: Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health.

Court order won't stop tribes' fight vs mining firm

TRIBAL members in Kasibu, Nueva Vizcaya barricade the road leading to a mining exploration site in Paquet Village.
MELVIN GASCON/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

By Melvin Gascon
Inquirer Northern Luzon

KASIBU, NUEVA VIZCAYA—OPPOSITION against the planned mining exploration in a village continued to grow as tribal residents from six villages here trooped to the site of a road blockade to prevent the entry of a mining firm in their community.

On Wednesday, more than 500 villagers belonging to different tribes stood guard at the road entrance to Pao Village here.

The villagers made the move despite a court order that prohibited their leaders from stopping the transport of equipment and construction materials of Oxiana Philippines Inc. (OPI) to the exploration site.

Villagers, who declined to be named for fear of being cited in contempt by the court, said more people went to the barricade site upon learning that their three village chiefs and 22 others had been barred by the court from joining the blockade.

For the second week, men, women and teenagers set up makeshift tents on top of a ridge, surrounding a boom laid across the road.

The boom was raised and lowered every time vehicles passed by.

Acting on the complaint of OPI, Judge Jose Godofredo Naui of the regional trial court here on July 23 issued a 20-day temporary restraining order (TRO) against 22 respondents, who were identified in the complaint as having led the road blockade since July 12.

Since Monday's issuance of the TRO, however, not one of the respondents had since showed up at the barricade site, the INQUIRER learned.

"We were told that policemen would handcuff us immediately if one of us showed up at the site," said Benito Cudiam, one of the respondents.

Tension grew when villagers saw on Wednesday soldiers and policemen set up camp in Paquet, about 200 meters from the barricade site.

But the villagers, composed of Bugkalot, Ibaloi, Kalanguya and Ifugao farmers, said they would block the entry of the company "whatever the consequences may be."

"We are not a violent people. We just want to be respected. If violence will erupt, you can be assured that it did not start from our group," another Bugkalot farmer said.

"We do not want to lose the fertile lands that we till [because] it is the only wealth that we have," said another farmer.

The villagers and other environment groups have been questioning the issuance of the company's exploration permit, which, documents showed, was given in 2003 and was never renewed but was extended twice for four years.

The Mining Act states that exploration permits shall only last two years, and shall be allowed three renewals.

They also assailed the company for supposedly failing to disclose that OPI had been sold to Royalco Resources Ltd., an Australian firm, in June 2006.

The INQUIRER tried to reach Lourdes Dolinen, OPI representative, but she did not respond to queries made through her mobile phone. In an earlier interview, she dismissed claims that OPI no longer existed.

Jerrysal Mangaoang, Cagayan Valley director of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, said he granted the extension to the company due to its failure to use the permit because of "force majeure."

Calatagan land ordinance questioned

CALATAGAN, BATANGAS—THE MUNICIPAL FISHeries and Aquatic Resources Management Council (MFARMC) added its voice to those questioning the town council's move to revise the comprehensive land use plan (CLUP) of Calatagan town and reclassify lands from agricultural to industrial.

They asked the council to suspend the implementation of Municipal Ordinance 89, which amends certain provisions and includes heavy industries in the town's zoning ordinance.

"There is no definite guarantee that we could achieve the state's policies on fisheries as indicated by the Fisheries Code if we won't consider its (CLUP revision) effects on the natural resources of our lands and seas," said Jessie de los Reyes, Calatagan MFARMC chair, in a letter submitted to the town council on July 24.

The MFARMC argued in a resolution on July 19 that the revision would affect the livelihood of farmers and small fishermen, who would be displaced once zoning takes place.

Controversial ordinance

On June 29, a day before the term of local legislators ended, the municipal council approved the revised CLUP.

The provincial board, however, did not tackle the controversial ordinance in its past three regular sessions.

MFARMC added that the CLUP revision would contradict the town's move to enact a coastal resource management plan on proper usage of its marine resources.

The body also questioned the inclusion of heavy industries in the ordinance, claiming that the move would have detrimental effects on nature and the town residents.

"There's no existing study that would prove that the land had ceased agricultural productivity," De los Reyes said in a phone interview.

The CLUP revision did not undergo proper consultation with the affected barangays, which tackle land reclassification from light or medium to heavy industries, he added.

He challenged the town councilors to first pass an Environmental Code for Calatagan, which would be a genuine basis for revising the CLUP.

Calatagan, a third class municipality in Batangas, whose coastal resources are undergoing rehabilitation, has been declared a marine reserve through Municipal Ordinance 08-02.

At least 19 of 25 barangays of the town are coastal areas with most families earning from the sale of fish, sea shells, sea cucumber, starfish, sea urchins and other marine creatures.

Calatagan Vice Mayor Ruben Bautista said the town council would be studying the proposals given by the MFARMC.

"We are willing to listen and we would study and weigh which things would be more beneficial for the environment and the people of Calatagan. We are always for the good of the environment," he said.

CLUP revision

He declined to comment, however, whether he was in favor of suspending the CLUP revision.

The INQUIRER learned that Bautista was among the seven town councilors who signed the controversial CLUP revision before their term ended last month.

In its website, the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board said that Calatagan last updated their CLUP on Nov. 13, 2002.

The MFARMC gave the town council until Aug. 5 to respond to their request or it would conduct more protests against implementation of the CLUP revision.

Last month, hundreds of farmer-beneficiaries in Barangays Baha and Talibayog barricaded the Calatagan municipal hall to show their disgust over the council's CLUP revision.

"No development can be put in place in the area since the land remains agricultural and agrarian in nature and there are pending cases for resolution in various judicial bodies," said Task Force Baha-Talibayog in a statement sent to the INQUIRER.

The task force is composed of 318 farmers awarded 818 emancipation patent titles under Presidential Decree No. 27.

The group alleged that the council revised the plan to accommodate Asturias Chemical Industries, which plans to build a cement plant complex and industrial park, but the local government denied this charge.

Asturias has a 25-year mineral production sharing agreement with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. *Marlon Alexander Luistro, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

ROUNDUP

Guns seized in Batangas co-op offices

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Police confiscated at least 11 unlicensed firearms on Saturday after a raid with the offices of an electric cooperative in Batangas province.

Supt. Roger James Brillantes, chief of the Regional Special Operations Group (RSOG) of the Calabarzon police, said his men simultaneously swooped down on the offices of the Batangas Electric Cooperative (Batelec) in the cities of Lipa and Tanauan and in the municipalities of San Jose and Rosario at around 6 a.m. in search of unlicensed guns.

As of presstime, the policemen have recovered at least eight 12-gauge shotguns and three pistols. Six other firearms had tampered security seals, Brillantes said. He said the raid was part of "Oplan Paglalansag" which aims to confiscate all loose firearms in Calabarzon.

Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

4 dead in 2 MRT road accidents in Bulacan

GUIGUINTO, Bulacan—Four persons were killed while two others were hurt in separate road accidents in this town on July 25, police said.

In the first incident, three men were killed after their tricycle hit a 10-wheel truck along the Cagayan Valley Road in Barangay Sta. Cruz at 11:15 p.m. Marino Gonzales, the tricycle driver, and his passengers, Reynaldo Manangan and Ajerico Medio, died in the accident. Their companion, Jessie Gamos, was hurt and taken to the Sacred Heart Hospital in the City of Malolos.

In Barangay Tuktukan, Ronino Dimagiba was killed when his motorcycle hit the rear of a six-wheel truck along the MacArthur Highway. His companion, Randy Silungan, was taken to the Bulacan Provincial Hospital in Malolos for treatment. *Carmela Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon*

2 farmers slain in Davao

SULOP, Davao del Sur—Two farmers were killed when bandits involved in a string of cattle rustling activities shot them on July 23. Vicente Redoble, village chief of Litos, said the two farmers were talking at about 7:30 p.m. when a group of bandits arrived in Purok 3.

The farmers, Bando Siton and Maximo Nipangi, died from bullet wounds in various parts of their bodies.

Bandits have become a major concern for residents here and other hinterland areas of Davao del Sur. The armed men, composed mainly of B'laan *lumad*, were no longer contented with taking away farm animals but have started killing people, too, Redoble said.

He urged police authorities to deploy additional forces in his village. *Orlando Dinoy, Inquirer Mindanao*

New university head installed

Dr. FAY Lea Patria Mata-Lauraya was installed seventh president of Bicol University (BU) on June 28 at the Albay Cathedral in Legazpi City, Albay.

Lauraya was the vice president for production and concurrent director of auxiliary services, positions she held after her deanship in the College of Arts and Sciences at BU. She also served as department head of the Entrepreneurship Department.

Her vision for Bicol University is to respond to the call for quality education and to bring the university closer to the community. *Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Suspected bomber recaptured

DATU ODIN SINSUAT, Shariff Kabunsuan—Military and police agents recaptured here Saturday a suspected foreign-trained bomber who was among the 48 inmates that bolted the North Cotabato provincial jail in February.

Chief Insp. Fatima Malao, town police chief, said Guindo Tukan, who was facing charges in connection with the Kidapawan City bus terminal bombing in 2003, was the fifth escapee recaptured by authorities since they were "rescued" by suspected Moro Islamic Liberation Front from the provincial jail. Another was killed in a clash with government troops. *Edwin O. Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao*

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5-year plan on nuke-free zone OKd

From page A1

tivities of member states under the treaty," said Claro Cristobal, Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson.

Cristobal said the SEANWFZ commission, chaired by the Philippines, was scheduled to convene yesterday to review the cooperation to keep Southeast Asia nuclear-weapons free and plan its direction for the next 10 years.

Cristobal said a five-year work plan would be adopted during the meeting to ensure members would abide by and meet their commitments under the treaty, particularly on adhering to all international safeguards agreements.

Asean also plans to work closely with the International Atomic Energy Agency and other experts to develop a legal framework to meet international standards on nuclear safety, among other issues, he said.

Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo has said nuclear nonproliferation issues would be high on this week's agenda at a meeting between Asean and its 17 partners in a regional security dialogue.

North Korea's Foreign Minister Pak Ui Chun yesterday reaffirmed his country's commitment to ending its nuclear weapons program. However, he did not specify when North Korea would disable its nuclear facilities, Cristobal said.

Pak, who is making his first overseas trip since becoming foreign minister in May, is in Manila to attend the Asean Regional Forum, Asia's largest security organization.

North Korea shut down its Yongbyon reactor earlier this month under a February agreement reached in six-nation talks on its nuclear program, the first tangible progress after years of negotiations.

In return, Pyongyang has begun receiving 50,000 tons of oil from South Korea and is to eventually receive the equivalent of a total of 1 million tons for disabling all its nuclear facilities.

However, the latest round of nuclear talks ended earlier this month without any target date for disabling the facilities.

In a meeting yesterday with Romulo, Pak did not specify a date, but said his country "is committed to the agreement signed in February to move forward the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula," Cristobal said.

"The six-party talks have been producing good progress," he quoted Pak as saying.

Pak also reiterated his country's long-standing position that a principle of "action for action" should be followed for the successful implementation of the February accord, with each side taking steps in response to the other's, Cristobal said.

With reports from Reuters, AP

RP, North Korea sign bilateral agreement

THE PHILIPPINES AND NORTH Korea yesterday signed an agreement establishing a mechanism of bilateral consultations in the political, economic and cultural fields in a bid to further strengthen ties.

In a press briefing, Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Claro Cristobal said the agreement would provide a regular forum for the Philippines and North Korea to discuss and chart relations on a broad range of issues.

Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo and North Korean Foreign Minister Pak Ui Chun signed the agreement on the sidelines of the 40th Asean Ministerial Meetings (AMM).

Manila and Pyongyang established diplomatic relations in July 2000.

Romulo, who visited North Korea last month, welcomed the agreement, saying it would solidify relations between the two countries.

"Through this agreement, our two countries give full and clear expression to our shared hopes and aspirations for the welfare of our peoples, and for peace and stability in the region," he added.

Pak described the accord as an important phase in the bilateral relations of the two countries.

"Our cooperation is moving from strength to strength," said Pak. He said that North Korea was interested in developing cooperation in energy, information technology and cultural exchanges.

During the signing ceremony, Pak said that he would direct his country's foreign ministry to work closely with the DFA for the signing of a cultural agreement. *Cynthia D. Balana*

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Drug firms' lobby fund ...

From page A1

Iloilo Rep. Ferjenel Biron, a leading advocate of the measure in the House of Representatives, yesterday said a big part of the amount wasn't necessarily being spent to directly bribe legislators into shooting down a cheaper medicines bill.

"It includes the expenses for aggressive advertisements on radio, television and newspapers," he told the INQUIRER.

Biron said the amount of the alleged lobby money first came to light when the advocacy for cheaper medicines gained ground in the 11th Congress.

"I'm sure they're preparing the same amount for the 14th Congress," Biron said.

"No less than the President has verbalized her intention to have the bill passed so these companies are preparing for a tough battle," he said.

Cebu Rep. Eduardo Gullas, author of a similar bill in the 14th Congress which opened last week, said the pharmaceutical companies would be "frustrated" in case they lobby against the measure.

"The Speaker himself has personally vowed to give the highest priority to the bill's passage," Gullas said in a statement.

"Our people desperately need access to affordable medicine. The new Congress has no other recourse but to quickly pass the bill. It is bad enough that the previous Congress failed to pass (it)," he said.

Subtle

Biron said he was no stranger to "subtle lobbying" by the Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines (PHAP), which also represents giant foreign drug companies that operate in the country.

During the 13th Congress, he said he was approached by PHAP people to lobby against a cheaper medicines bill.

He said the last attempt came during the last session day in June when a PHAP representative allegedly invited him to "talk about the bill."

"Their manner is very subtle," Biron said. "They would politely ask if they could invite me for lunch or dinner or if they could visit me in my office. But I told them that it was too late because they didn't lower the prices of their medicines."

The PHAP has consistently denied bribing lawmakers.

During the special congressional session in February, four of PHAP's lobbyists were kicked out of the plenary hall of the House for apparently intervening when legislators were about to vote on the Cheaper Medicines Act of 2007 on the third and final reading.

The lobbyists had passed a note telling Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin to question the quorum, a move that would have killed the bill. The measure eventually failed to pass because of the lack of quorum.

The PHAP later issued a statement saying: "Since the PHAP is a corporate constituent in the first congressional district of Representative Locsin, we wanted to get (him) to listen to our proposed amendments ... In any democratic country, the first step one must take in order to be heard is to write your congressman."

TV stations

Biron said he had experienced first-hand the effects of intense lobbying by drug companies in the media.

"I am hardly invited on talk shows to discuss the cheaper medicines bill," he said. "I would eventually learn that some television stations were told by the companies not to have me as a guest. Otherwise, they would pull out their advertisements."

Despite the purported pressure, Biron said he would make it similarly difficult for the drug companies to suppress the bill in Congress.

"As long as I and my fellow congressmen advocating cheaper medicines are here, these companies will have a lot of headaches."

Biron is the author of House Bill No. 1, a resurrected version of the failed Cheaper Medicines Act of 2007.

Unlike the version passed by the Senate in the 13th Congress, the Biron measure includes a provision for drug price regulation.

Under this scheme, a body will be formed to determine the price cap to keep companies from selling drugs at exorbitant prices.

Also unlike the Senate bill authored by Sen. Manuel Roxas II, the House bill "clearly identifies" the type of drugs whose prices would be drastically lowered, Biron said.

He said it was useless to allow the parallel importation of patented drugs, the centerpiece measure of the Roxas bill, because these supposedly covered only about 100 out of the 40,000 registered drugs in the country.

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From page A1

sus in the world today and, in a sense, this is ministry-healing," said Fr. Jeff Shannon, who like Suarez belongs to the same order, the Companions of the Cross.

Shannon now accompanies Suarez in his healing ministry all over the world.

The husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo, Jose Miguel, was one of those healed by Suarez in his celebrated "miraculous" recovery this year.

Deedee Siytangco, a spokesperson for former President Corazon Aquino and now one of those in the core group organizing Suarez's healing Masses and sessions in the country, relates that Ms Arroyo had called for Suarez to say Mass for her husband during Holy Week.

The President's husband was scheduled to undergo a crucial operation that day, and so Suarez asked those attending the Mass to make only one petition—for the successful operation of Arroyo.

Before the operation, Siytangco said, Ms Arroyo was told by the doctors that one of the problems they were having was finding the vein that was crucial to the success of her husband's heart operation.

Five minutes after the Mass, the surgeons were able to find the crucial vein which led to the successful open heart surgery and almost miraculous recovery of the President's husband.

Before that, however, Suarez had held meetings with the President's family and said Masses for the health of her husband.

"He had already prayed over him earlier during that Holy Week when the (President's husband) complained of his heart. He touched his heart already," said Siytangco.

Overflow of Mass

Suarez's healing is always done after Mass. Shannon explained that Suarez believes that it is Jesus in the Eucharist who heals people through him. The healing grace therefore happens as an overflow of the Mass.

"This way all the focus is not on him [Suarez] but it's all on God, all on Jesus," Shannon said.

Suarez celebrated Mass on Saturday in a chapel at the Wellness Center in the Meralco Compound on Ortigas Avenue in Pasig City. It was offered following a retreat of a religious women's organization, Martha's Vineyard.

The place was overflowing with people and yet was very solemn.

Everyone was quietly and peacefully reflecting and listening to the choir. And perhaps also silently praying for their own healing—for whatever sickness and hurts they had.

Catchers

After Mass, Shannon asked those who came to seek the healing touch of Suarez to line up across the altar while "catchers" stood behind to assist those who would "rest in the spirit" during the healing process.

Small mattresses were also prepared to cushion falls.

The "resting in the spirit" is when those healed fall, as if in a fainting spell—a scenario often seen in similar healing sessions.

The fall is called "resting in the spirit" because it is at this point that people experience and feel the conversion brought about by God's healing grace, according to Shannon.

Healed on the spot

Zenaida Mendoza, one of those who lined up, was touched by Suarez, and "rested in the spirit." She was healed on the spot, she claimed.

"It was all warm in my body. It was all of a sudden moving toward my body and I had to fall," she said, describing her experience of "resting in the spirit."

PRIEST-HEALER Fernando Suarez. JOAN BONDOC

Mendoza had been suffering from carpal tunnel syndrome for about 17 years and she had to stop working in 1991 and eventually wear a hand brace.

"It hurt so much I couldn't even write," she said.

But after being touched by Suarez, she said, all the numbness in her hands vanished and, slowly, she was able to move her hands again.

Amazing

"To be healed, it's amazing and I claim it. It is with me and I pray I have it for the rest of my life," said Mendoza, all the while crying and demonstrating how freely she could now use her hands.

The healing process may, of course, happen differently with different people. Shannon explained that most of the time, the healing happened on the spot. He said as soon as Suarez prayed with the person and touched him or her, the person experienced something.

Delayed for some

For some people, however, it is delayed, he said. People get a little grace after Suarez's healing session and then the actual healing happens through the night, or the next day, or the next week.

For example, Federico Galang, one of those who attended Mass that day, earlier asked Suarez to pray for his son, Federico Galang III, who has been diagnosed with cancer of the colon two months ago. The young Federico, one of the attendees at the Mass that day, was cleared of his cancer.

Before the operation, the elder Galang said his son's condition was so bad that the doctors were preparing to cut through his son's stomach and attach a bag outside to collect digestive waste.

"But after Father Suarez prayed for him, that never happened. They [the doctors] were able to connect to the rectum. The surgery was successful. He's better now. We have a lot of faith in God and that is what healed him," said Galang.

And a lot of the healing happens with faith in God's healing hand.

Tears of joy

Another cancer patient, Rosario S. de la Cruz, was one of those who lined up the altar that day to be healed by Suarez. She was diagnosed with Stage 4 ovarian cancer in March and the tumor had metastasized to her lungs. She has been undergoing chemotherapy since.

She was in high spirits after the healing session, sharing—with tears of joy—that Suarez had told her after their prayer together not to worry anymore about her cancer.

"He told me not to be afraid anymore because I'm healed," said De la Cruz, adding that Suarez's assuring words that day had given her a lot of hope.

Asean offers sanctuary . . .

From page A1

pacities and resources of the relevant missions during a crisis."

Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Claro Cristobal said the SOP was an offshoot of the Philippine policy giving priority to the protection of overseas Filipino workers numbering 8 million.

Cristobal said that under the draft agreement, an Asean member that does not have a consular mission in a third country wracked by civil strife can seek formal assistance from a member state with a presence there to assist its nationals.

Shelters

In case of imminent danger, however, "a citizen of an Asean member country may directly seek assistance from the missions of other Asean member countries or go directly to shelters or sanctuaries provided by their missions."

At the height of the Israeli-Palestinian crisis in Lebanon in July 2006, Asean cobbled together an informal arrangement among its missions in Lebanon and in neighboring countries to assist Asean nationals in distress.

The two-day AMM at the Philippine International Convention Center will be followed by the Asean post-ministerial meeting and the Asean Regional Forum (ARF).

Participants

Asean officials scheduled to arrive yesterday and today include Indonesian Foreign Minister Dr. N. Hassan Wirajuda, Malaysian Foreign Minister Dato' Seri Syed Hamaid Albar, Lao Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs for International Cooperation Thongloun Sisoulilth, Burmese (Myanmar) Foreign Minister U Nyan Win, Thai Foreign Minister Nitya Pibulsonggram, Timor Leste Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Adaljiza A. Magno, Singapore Foreign Minister George Yeo Yong Boon, and Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs for International Cooperation Hor Namhong.

Five foreign ministers of the Asean and its dialogue partners—Vietnam, Pakistan, the United States, Canada and Papua New Guinea—will not be able to attend due to developments in their countries. They, however, sent their deputies here.

Asean groups the Philippines, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao, Malaysia, Burma, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Asean's dialogue partners are Australia, Canada, China, European Union, India, Japan, New Zealand, Russian Federation, South Korea and the United States.

The ARF is composed of Asean members as well as Bangladesh, North Korea, Mongolia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka and Timor Leste.

Preparatory meetings

Senior officials started meeting early this week in preparation for the five-day Asean meetings.

Philippine officials have mobilized a force of 6,500 to secure the convention site.

Yesterday, police arrested four of the 15 people who tried to hold a demonstration without a permit at the convention site. They carried streamers saying, "Stop the persecution of Falun Gong," a group banned in China. *With reports from Allison W. Lopez, AFP and AP*

Burma blocks human rights body

From page A1

for the immediate establishment of such a body, which would deal with human rights violations in the region, the diplomat said.

Burma, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam—Asean's newest members—all have authoritarian or single-party governments.

Separately, a Philippine proposal for a clause in the charter allowing Asean to vote on critical issues to hasten decisions, instead of its normal reliance on consensus, was struck down. It was also decided that there will be no mention of sanctions for member states for serious breaches of the charter, the diplomat said.

The ministers could decide to outline some sanctions in a separate implementing document, the diplomat said.

Asean conference spokesperson Claro Cristobal said he was not aware of details of recent deliberations on the charter but stressed that any draft produced by the task force could still be changed by the foreign ministers or Asean heads of state.

Philippine priority

"This is a very important document," he said. "It has the potential of binding half a billion people's lives so every great deliberation is important."

The creation of an Asean rights body has been a high priority for the Philippines, the host of this year's meeting, with Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo saying it would give the group "more credibility in the international community."

Asean, formed 40 years ago, decided to draft a charter to become a more rules-based organization with better bargaining power in international negotiations. It hopes the charter can be formally signed at the annual Asean leaders' summit in November.

The debate on the proposed charter reflects how Asean's diverse membership, including fledgling democracies, communist countries and a military dictatorship, has hobbled decision-making and rapid progress on key issues.

Enshrining human rights protection in the charter has been a touchy issue because some Asean countries have spotty rights records, such as Burma.

Some members' fears

Some Asean members fear such a commission could allow scrutiny of rights conditions in one country, possibly violating the group's cardinal policy of noninterference in each other's affairs.

Human rights groups complain that Asean's noninterference principle has fostered undemocratic regimes in the region.

BURMESE Foreign Minister U Nyay Win. AFP

Senior Asean diplomats were working separately in Manila to prepare a heavy agenda for the foreign ministers, who began arriving yesterday.

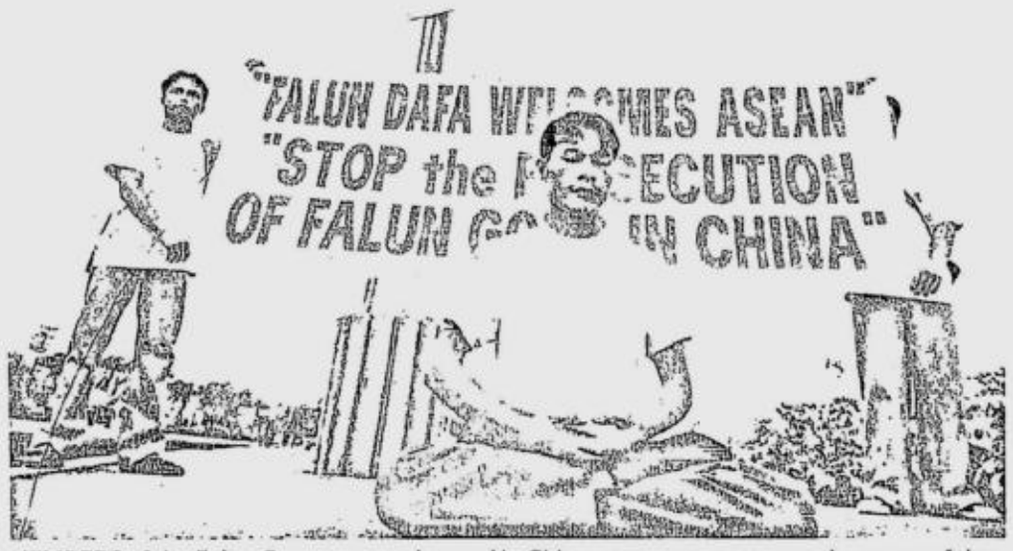
Counterterrorism

They are expected to tackle terrorism, better enforcement of a regional antinuclear treaty, disaster management and ways to help poorer members catch up with wealthier ones to foster faster economic integration.

A draft of a statement to be issued by the ministers today calls on all member states to ratify an Asean convention on counterterrorism that was signed by heads of state early this year.

It also calls on Asean countries to intensify efforts to better enforce a 2002 accord that aims to prevent armed confrontations in disputed territories in the South China Sea.

Asean was founded as an anticommunist organization during the Cold War but has evolved into a trade and political bloc. It consists of Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Burma, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. *AP*



MEMBERS of the Falun Gong, a group banned in China, stage a protest near the venue of the Asean ministerial meetings. AP

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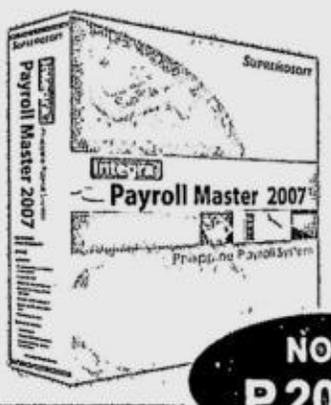

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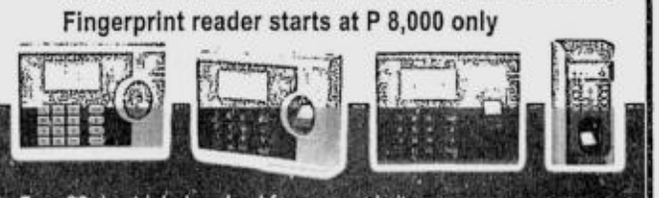

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Sham opposition 'majority' in Senate

From page A1

weak position to pursue his own agenda because of the fragmentation of the chamber into blocs. The solid vote of eight proadministration senators was the nucleus of the coalition that gave him the 14 votes that enabled him to win the Senate presidency, although he was reelected in May on the opposition ticket.

Real power

Because of this, Villar's hold is so precarious that he can go anytime if the administration bloc withdraws support over, for example, distribution of key Senate committees, especially the chairmanship of the blue ribbon committee.

As hostage to the proadministration minority in the Senate, Villar does not call the shots. The real power behind the scenes in control of the Senate is no other than Ms Arroyo, exercising it through her cohorts in the minority of eight.

The numbers from the May Senate election results do not tell the reality of the new imbalance of power in the chamber; they belie the popular belief that the opposition won 7-3-2 (seven for the Genuine Opposition (GO), three for the administration's Team Unity (TU), and two "independents").

Villar was elected by the majority of 14 senators. The vote did not run along the opposition-administration divide. This is what complicated matters.

Looking for a leader

The 14 who elected Villar was a rainbow coalition. Nine came from the administration allies, including the three TUs elected in May and six holdovers from the previous Senate. Of the remaining five, three came from the formal opposition (GO) and two from nominally and ostensibly independent senators.

Villar defeated Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. for the Senate presidency, although both claimed to be oppositionists. The question is: With the May election results, who can wear the opposition mantle?

The opposition camp was deeply divided over the issue of the Senate presidency. Among the oppositionists, Villar was backed by Senators Francis Escudero, Jinggoy Estrada and Alan Peter Cayetano.

Villar sealed the presidency with the solid vote of proadministration senators, only after several opposition senators broke ranks with their colleagues. Their defection touched off recriminations in the opposition camp, highlighting their disarray and the irony of the 7-3-2 May election results, which proved to be an empty victory for the opposition.

Pathetic minority

With the election of Villar, the opposition lost the opportunity not only to control the Senate and its agenda. The switch of the five senators drew fire from Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who accused Villar, Estrada, Cayetano and Escudero of being "political mongrels."

Villar's election and the alignment that followed reduced the notional opposition to a pathetic minority who called itself the "Solid 8."

In view of these results, the opposition emerged so vulnerable to manipulation of their disunity by Ms Arroyo. Villar sounded empty when he said after his election: "A legislative body like the Senate is an effective instrument of check and balance."

Oppositionist or collaborator?

To rationalize his securing the administration senators' support, Villar apologetically said: "But the grandeur of this purpose is lost on some who think that that the Senate's role is one of unfailing negative criticism bordering on sheer obstructionism."

This statement put in doubt the bona fides of Villar as an opposition leader or as a closet collaborator of the Arroyo administration.

Villar interpreted the mandate of the May election results without the ardor of an opposition stalwart. He said: "Over the years, the Senate has been the subject of much criticism and doubt, leading many to conclude that it is best to abolish it. However, the recently concluded senatorial elections only emphasized the Senate's crucial role in the balance of power among its coequal branches of government."

The mandate of the last election, he said, is that the Senate "must maintain its institutional independence, beholden to no political power but to the sovereignty of the Filipino people."

Test of strength

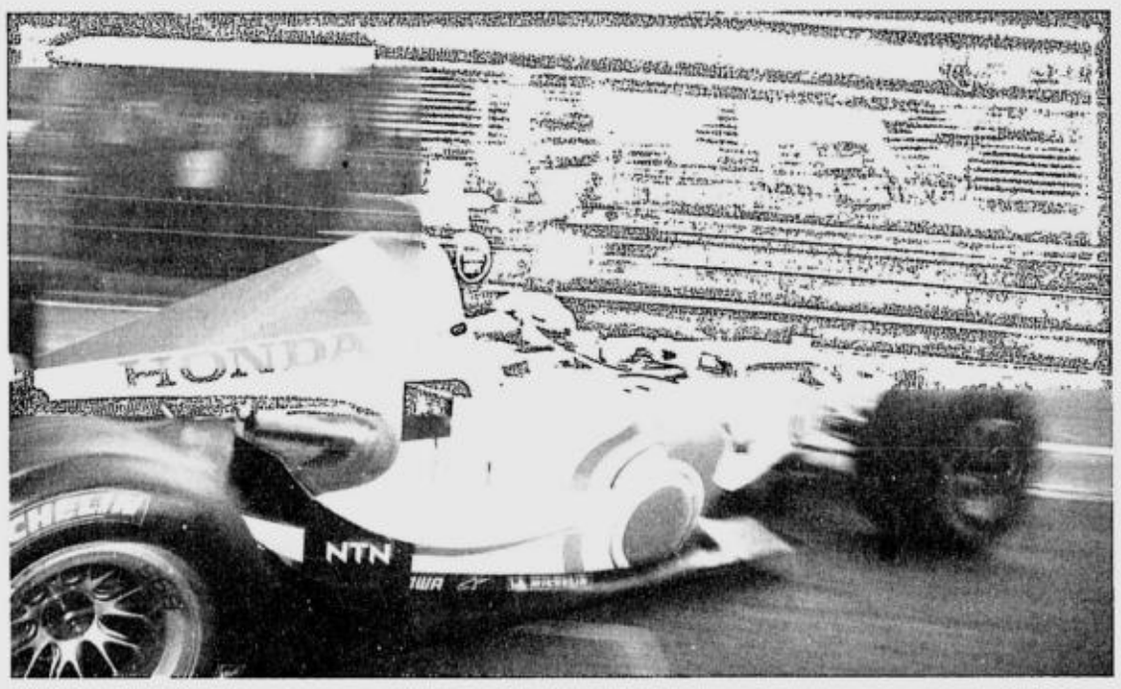
This is soaring rhetoric, but these questions are asked: Is Villar the leader the Senate can trust to maintain its independence, or is he paving the way for a sellout to the administration?

The control of the Senate by the new majority behind Villar has left the opposition with little on the chairmanships of key committees, especially the strategic oversight blue ribbon committee. Proadministration senators want Sen. Joker Arroyo to retain the chair. The reelected Senate majority leader, Francisco Pangilinan, thinks the chair should go to a senator "more identified with the opposition."

The test of strength of who calls the shots in the Senate is the blue ribbon committee.

Even the choice of Pangilinan as the majority leader is a mockery. In actual strength in the Senate, the opposition does not command the majority in the Senate, despite the May election results and their nominal head count.

The election of Villar was not only a distortion of the mandate of the May election. It exposed the sham and emptiness of the opposition "majority" in the new Senate.



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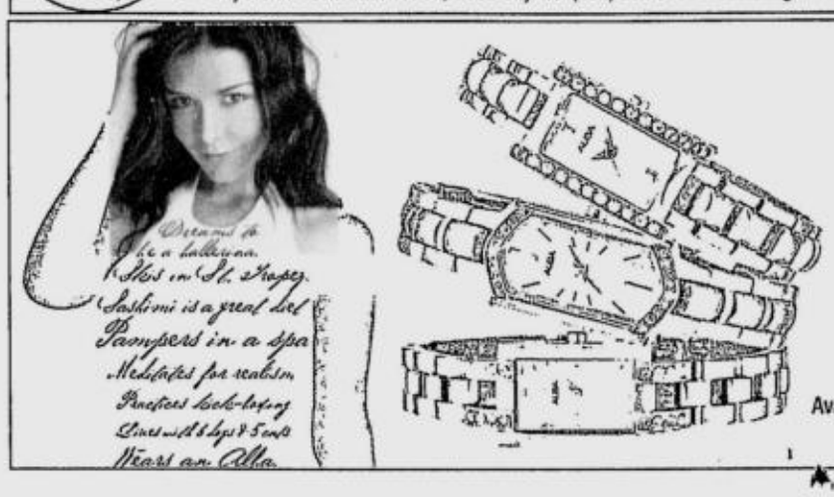

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Search for oil to begin off Antique coast

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—A MALAYSIAN OIL EXPLORation firm and the Philippine National Oil Company-Exploration Corp. will start drilling operations next month to confirm oil deposits estimated to reach 160 million barrels off the coast of Culasi town in Antique.

If confirmed, the oil deposits could be the biggest in the country, according to outgoing Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla.

"We are hoping for positive results. This would mean a lot to the energy independence of the country," Lotilla told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview yesterday.

Lotilla said the government had contracted the Malaysian-owned Petronas Carigali Overseas Sdn Bhd (PCOSB) to drill exploration wells at an area located 12 kilometer south of Maniguin Island in Culasi town, around 61 km north of the capital town of San Jose.

The site, which is 58 km from Boracay Island and 260 km from Batangas, is part of the exploration site of PNOC-EC and PCOSB covering 14,667 sq km east and south of Mindoro Island and west of Panay Island.

It is considered one of the most attractive exploration areas situated in the same geologic region of northwest Palawan where the Malampaya natural gas reserves are located.

Positive results, more wells

Lotilla said the drilling of an exploration well reaching 140 meters underwater would start in the third week of August and last for a month. He said more wells would be drilled if the operation should yield positive results.

Drilling one well is estimated to cost around $20 million, said Raymundo Savella, PNOC-EC exploration manager.

The entire exploration operation would last seven years at the maximum, depending on the results of the digging of wells, sample analyses and studies, he said.

The first phase taking from one to two years involves the drilling of one well and acquiring data. If the results are positive, the operation will proceed to the second phase, which is expected to last for two years and involves the drilling of another well and getting more data.

The last phase, which is expected to last for three years involves the drilling of two more wells.

According to Savella, the exploration will be called off during any of the phases if the results would not confirm a significant volume of oil deposits.

The exploration contract is extendable for three years. The development and production period covers 25 years and is renewable for a series of five-year periods but shall not exceed 15 years.

Exploration and sampling were done in the area more than a decade ago by various exploration firms but the data gathered showed only a small volume of potential oil reserves.

Richest in Southeast Asia

Recent studies, however, showed a larger volume of oil reserves, said Savella.

Data taken at the site off Maniguin Island confirmed the presence of high quality petroleum source rocks capable of generating large amounts of oil. The source is considered one of the richest in Southeast Asia, according to PNOC-EC data.

Savella said the exploration to confirm the potential oil reserves could not start earlier because they had to look for investors to underwrite the exploration, which could cost $80 million.

Lotilla said that if the reserves are confirmed, 60 percent of the net proceeds would go to the national government while the service contractor would get 40 percent.

Of the 60 percent share of the national government, 40 percent would go to the local government unit.

Antique Gov. Salvacion Zaldivar-Perez said the people were hopeful the results of the exploration would be positive.

"We are crossing our fingers. This would be a big help to our economy," Perez said in a telephone interview.

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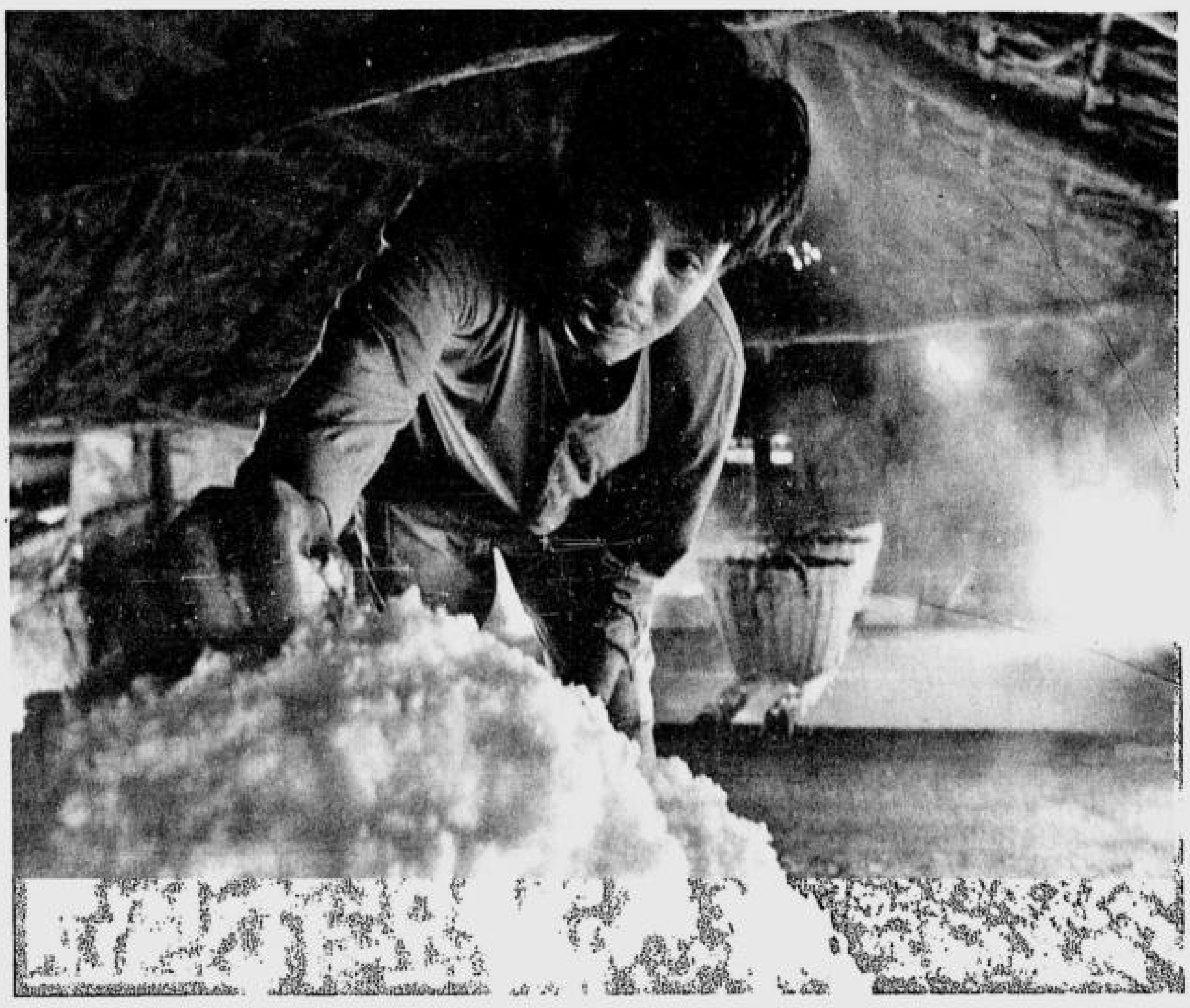

AWARD WINNER
Steve Udaundo is 34 and he collects rock salt in an improvised salt refinery in Barangay Estrella, Pasuquin, Ilocos Norte. The work earns him P900-P1,000 per week. This photo by INQUIRER photographer Edwin Bacasmas won first prize in the recent Press Photographers of the Philippines and Department of Tourism-sponsored "Seven Days in Ilocos Norte" photo shoot-out that aims to promote the scenic spots and the people of the province. An exhibit of all the photo entries opened last week at the National Press Club in Intramuros, Manila.

China acts to repair shoddy, dangerous image of its goods

By David Barboza

SHANGHAI, CHINA—AFTER YEARS of being accused by Western nations of making only token gestures to fight fake goods and after months of complaints about the safety of its exports, China is taking extraordinary steps to change its image.

Last week, Beijing unveiled new controls aimed at fighting counterfeit drugs and substandard exports. High-ranking officials and regulators vowed to strengthen China's food safety system, tighten controls over chemical use by large seafood and meat producers, and create a system that holds producers more accountable for selling unsafe products.

Concerted effort

The government also announced that it had broken up a series of criminal rings that operated huge manufacturing centers, producing goods as varied as pirated Microsoft software, fake Viagra and imitation Crest toothpaste.

Authorities here have also reached out to Ogilvy Public Relations, an international corporate consultancy on crisis management.

"This is a very concerted effort to show they are doing something," said Russell Leigh Moses, a longtime political analyst based in Beijing. "They are using work groups, issuing directives and closing factories. They are rolling out the artillery."

Problems deeply rooted

Spurred on by a sense of economic realpolitik, Beijing has grown particularly fearful that mounting international pressure could lead to sanctions or embargoes, and thereby hinder China's booming economy.

Whether promising to overhaul China's regulatory regime and stepping up enforcement will be enough to tame what some view as the Wild, Wild East of capitalism is unclear, analysts say, because some of the problems are so deeply rooted.

"There's no quick fix," says Henk Bekedam, the World Health Organization's top representative in China. "China has perhaps been cutting some corners because the focus has been on growth. But they have 5,000 companies that produce medicine. That's far too many. The government has a limited ability to enforce things. They need to start with simple things: reduce the number of people you monitor."

Still, even critics of China's policies have been impressed with the catalog of recently announced changes.

The bold actions, experts say, are partly aimed at easing political pressure from the United States and the European Union, where regulators and politicians are pressing for assurances about the quality and safety of goods made here after a string of recalls involving goods like tainted pet food and toothpaste, defective tires and dangerous toys.

New York Times News Service

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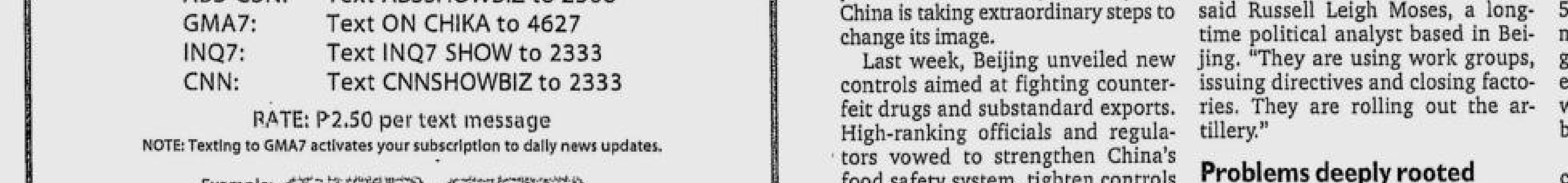

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UNSUNG BUT NOT FORGOTTEN HEROES

War memorial honors brave Chinese fighters

By Allison W. Lopez

WITHOUT WEAPONS OR UNIFORMS, THEY were next to powerless against the powerful Japanese Army which occupied the Philippines during the second World War.

But armed with a strong spirit, a group of Chinese volunteers organized themselves and helped free a country and a people foreign to them.

Unknown to many, not a few Chinese laborers and students flew to the Philippines and engaged in intelligence and sabotage operations against Japanese troops.

Recently, a memorial to the valiant efforts of the unsung heroes was unveiled inside the Chinese Cemetery in Sta. Cruz, Manila.

Located on Chun Chin corner Consul Gen. Young Road, the two-story Philippine Chinese Anti-Japanese War Memorial Hall has a photo gallery showing members of the 1,000-strong Wha Chi 48th squadron, which waged a war against the Japanese forces from 1942 to 1946.

Wha Chi, said the organization's executive secretary Sally King, loosely translated, means "Chinese troops."

"The honor we have given them for their sacrifices is long overdue. They helped in paving the way for Americans to come in, and gain back freedom for Manila and its residents at that time," said Ludivico Badoy, executive director of the National Historical Institute (NHI).

Standing in front of the memorial is an obelisk with a marker, constructed by the NHI on April 8, 1979, in honor of the squadron.

Newspaper clippings

The mini museum also features artifacts such as clippings from the Chinese troops' underground newspapers, such as the Chinese Guide Daily and Chinese Daily Bulletin, which espoused the importance of their struggle.

On display on the second floor are old battle gear and a large Philippine map marked with red lights to indicate the places where the group fought. Commissioned paintings depicting battles made up for the lack of pictures capturing those moments.

The blessing of the memorial, which was funded and is being maintained by the Wha Chi organization, was attended by mostly relatives of the squadron members. But some surviving war veterans, like 80-year-old Uy Suy Kuan who came all the way from Dumaguete, also graced the occasion.

Born in November 1927, Suy Kuan was the squadron's youngest soldier at 15 years old. A native of Negros province, he was sent to study in Manila when the war broke out in 1942.

His reason for joining the squadron may not be as selfless as one would expect: Suy Kuan said he had no choice but to go with his principal's family *"kasi walang mapuntahan* (no one else to go to)."

"During the war, *mahirap talaga* (it was very difficult). He did not want to be independent so he just went with them and became a guerrilla," said his eldest son, Charlie Uy.

Though Suy now finds it difficult to speak after he was diagnosed to have cancer of the vocal chords, he was eager to tell his story with the use of a microphone-like gadget he places near a small hole on his neck.

Too many experiences

"I didn't want to kill anybody," he said. When asked about his most memorable experience, Suy replied: "Too many experiences. *Merong* (there was) suffering, happiness, *gutom* (hunger,) *sakit* (illness)."

As guerrillas, he said the Wha Chi was "very poor" and had to beg for food from civilians but they never forced anybody to give them anything.

Later, Suy recalled being in the squadron's version of the infamous Bataan Death March, where they walked from Pampanga to Sta. Cruz, Laguna, to flee from pursuing Japanese soldiers.

WAR MEMORIAL/ A26

THE PHILIPPINE Chinese Anti-Japanese War Memorial Hall pays tribute to the 1,000-strong Wha Chi 48th Squadron whose members fought against the Japanese Army. RUDY ESPERAS

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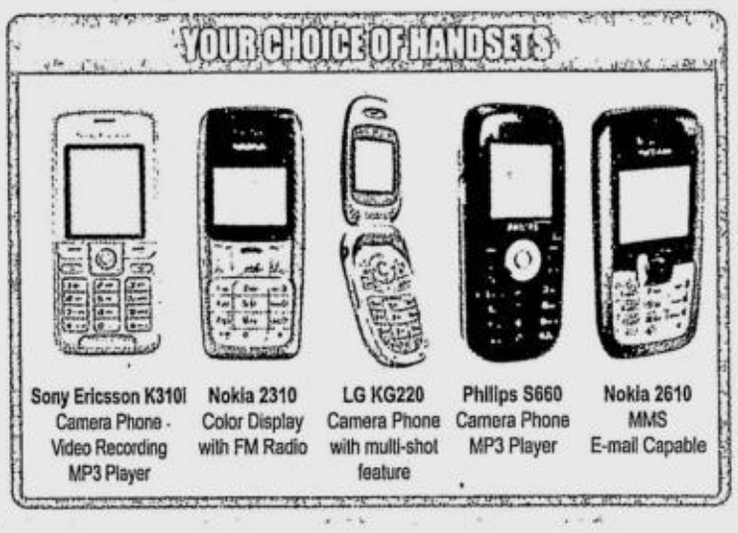

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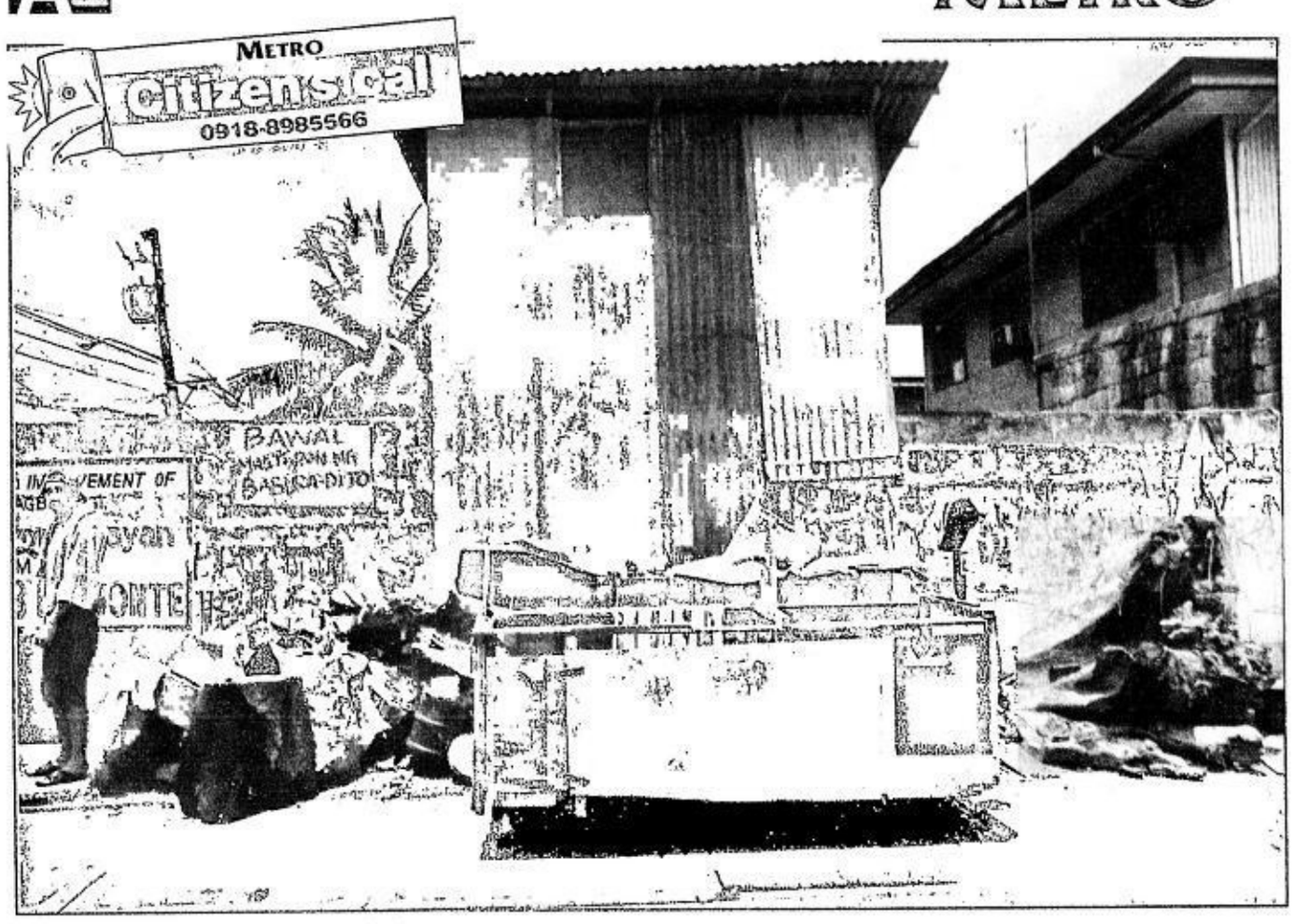


QC MANHOLE USED AS DUMP RYAN LIM

A complaint from Julie Mariano of Mabuhay Street, Quezon City goes: "The manhole at the corner of Mabuhay and Mapagbigay Streets in Central Quezon City has no cover. As a result, people toss their garbage inside the open manhole every day that it is now overflowing with trash. This is both a health and environmental hazard. *Sana po malagyan na ng* cover *ang* manhole *sa lalong madaling panahon* (We hope the manhole is covered as soon as possible)."

More frequent garbage collection in Cainta, please!

I WOULD like to call the attention of Cainta Mayor Mon Ilagan and Rizal Rep. Michael Duavit to garbage collection in Village East. *Pambihira*, once a week *na lang nga*, *sumasablay pa* (Garbage collectors are supposed to come around once a week, but this does not even happen!) Kindly look into this matter and change the garbage contractors, if necessary. Make life a little less stressful for us *naman*, will you?

JUANCHO JOSE, 39, Cainta

No right of way

WE LIVE at the boundary of Antipolo and Marikina cities near the Balanti creek. For years, our mobility has been restrained because we have no right of way. The Marikina government even put railings along the creek to prevent us from passing through. Hope you can help us.

MYRA BAUTISTA, 35, Barangay Mayamot, Antipolo City

U-turn slot not a big help

THE U-TURN slot for public utility vehicles below the footbridge at the Sta. Lucia mall on the Cainta-Marcos Highway way is to blame for the heavy traffic in this area especially during the morning rush hour. Help!

JOCELYN RAMOS, 43, Quezon City

Signs of the times

ON THE CENTER island on Agham Road in Quezon City is a signboard that reads "PULIS (police)." Below it is a more visible ad of beer bottles being raised as if in a toast. I find the positioning of the signs rather ironic.

CHERRY ARRIOLA, 43, Quezon City

METROBRIEFS

2 men get life terms for trader's slay

A QUEZON City judge has sentenced two men to life imprisonment for killing a businessman and robbing him of P1 million seven years ago. QC Regional Trial Court Judge Bayani Vargas also ordered Bonifacio Bongo and Romeo Canete to pay the victim's family more than P400,000 in damages during last week's promulgation. Court records showed that Bongo and Canete barged inside Arturo Caranto's home in Novaliches, Quezon City on May 29, 2000 and robbed him of P1 million at gunpoint. When Caranto chased them, they shot him in the jaw and chest. The victim later died of his wounds.

Margaux C. Ortiz

Cop arrested

A POLICEMAN was arrested Saturday by other lawmen for his alleged involvement in the robbery and killing of a man in Tondo last Friday. PO1 Ruben Guadalquiver Baratas, 30, was arrested at the Regional Headquarters Support Group of the National Capital Region Police Office in Camp Bagong Diwa, Taguig City. He was identified by witnesses as one of those who held up Christopher Lumbang, who had just withdrawn money from a bank in Navotas.

Allison W. Lopez

Holdup victim's kin happy, sad over court ruling

By Kristine L. Alave

THE PARENTS OF CHARLENE Santos, the call center agent who was shot to death by holdup men, have bittersweet feelings about the court decision sentencing their daughter's killers to life imprisonment.

In a phone interview with the INQUIRER, Elma, Charlene's mother said they were glad that Judge Amelia Manalastas of the Pasig City Regional Trial Court Branch 268 found Ryan Corcuera and Rodeo Bartolome guilty of killing her daughter on April 2, 2006.

The ruling, however, would not heal the wound caused by Charlene's untimely death. "We are very happy with the decision. We wanted this for so long. But it will still be painful for us," Elma said.

She added that the family wants to thank the witnesses and police officers who testified even though their lives were threatened.

Elma and her husband, Tony, said they wanted to hear firsthand Judge Manalastas' ruling last Friday.

But according to Elma, her daughter appeared to her in a dream on the eve of the promulgation, as if warning them against attending. The mother said she believed that her daughter wanted to shield them from further trouble and heartbreak.

Tony said he also had a "bad feeling" about Friday's promulgation and his wife's dream intensified his hunch.

He added that he and his wife could be targets of retaliation by friends of the accused.

Tony said their suspicions were not unfounded. Once, he saw somebody follow him on a motorcycle after he went to one of the hearings. He also noted that the accused and their friends would stare at him to unnerve and intimidate him in court.

After the trial which lasted for more than a year, Judge Manalastas sentenced Corcuera and Bartolome to life imprisonment Friday morning.

The judge also directed the accused to pay P500,000 in moral damages, P110,500 in reparation and P50,000 in civil indemnity pay to Charlene's family.

In her ruling, Manalastas rejected the denials and alibis of the accused, who said they were in other places when the incident happened.

Manalastas said the defense failed to establish that Corcuera and Bartolome were somewhere else at the time of the shooting.

"Denial of both accused cannot prevail over the positive assertion of the prosecution's eyewitnesses, Mr. Jose F. Arroyo who positively identified accused Ryan Corcuera, and Mr. Dominic Scarella, who on the other hand, positively identified accused Rodeo Bartolome," she said.

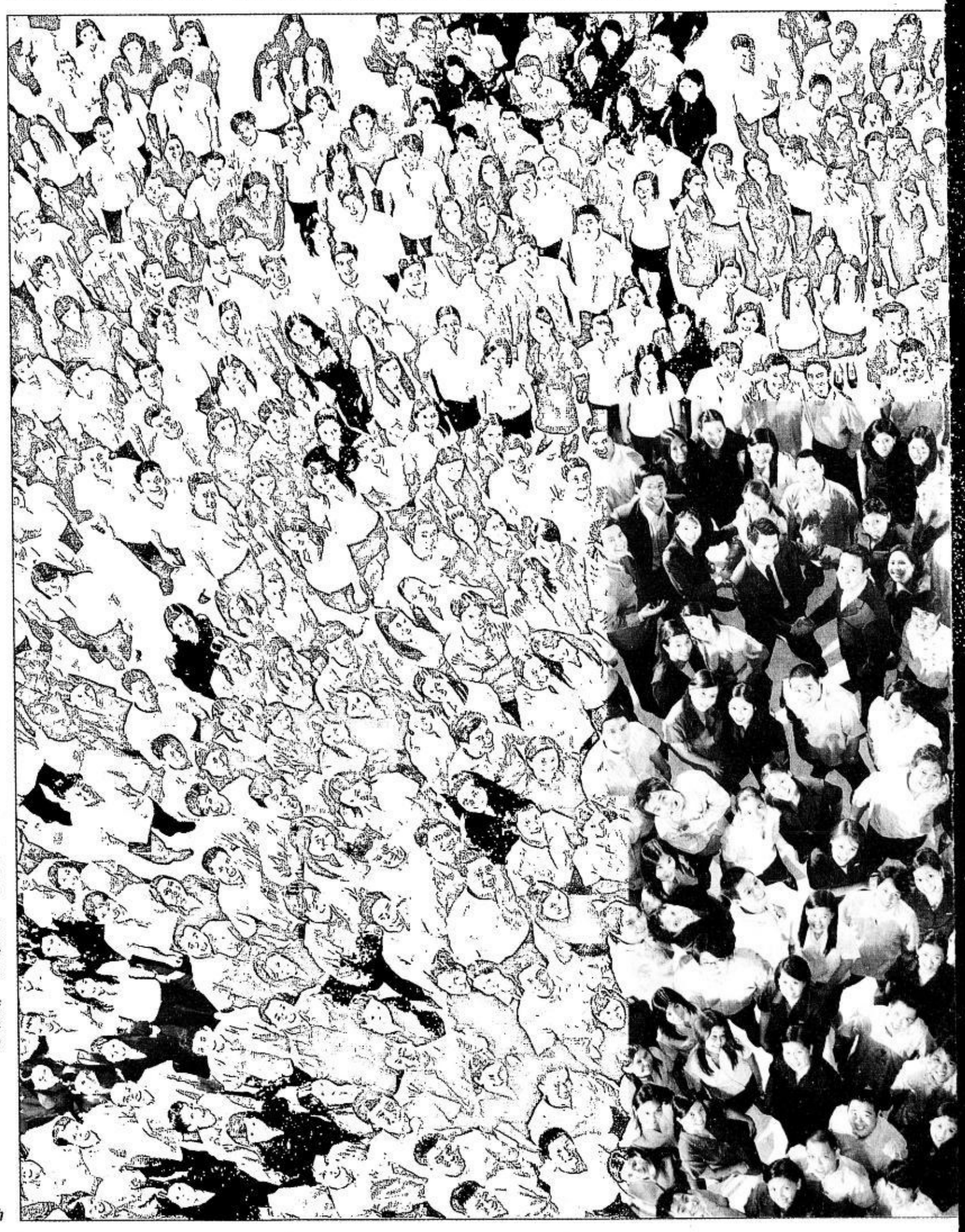
Based on the testimony of witnesses and police investigators, Corcuera and Bartolome hijacked the Mitsubishi van being driven by Arroyo at about 6:30 p.m. in the Ortigas Business District.

The two armed suspects announced a holdup and divested the passengers of their money and personal belongings. Charlene, who was seated beside Corcuera and Bartolome, asked the suspects to return her company identification card.

At that point, Corcuera got irritated by Charlene's question and shouted to his companion that he would kill the passenger. Scarella, one of the passengers, said the accused pointed his gun at the 27-year old call center agent's mouth and pulled the trigger.

The accused, along with one unidentified suspect who sat at the back of the van, alighted from the vehicle in Rosario Bridge, taking with them the victims' money and cell phones. Charlene was rushed to the Pasig City General Hospital where she was declared dead on arrival.

UY SUY Kuan, one of the squadron's few surviving members, as a young lieutenant (left) and with his wife (inset) during a celebration. He came all the way from Dumaguete to attend the unveiling of the memorial. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



War memorial . . . From page A25

Despite their situation, he recalled an amusing incident. Upon reaching Norzagaray River in Bulacan, they ate *alimasag* (crabs) that caused an allergic reaction, resulting in swollen faces. "*Parang siopao* (We looked like *siopao*)," said Suy.

But the Japanese troops could not be warded off. Arriving in Sta. Cruz, Laguna, Suy said they fought for 12 hours, using only automatic rifles, against the Japanese who were stationed in a church and armed with cannons.

To counter their opponents' more powerful weapons, he said they filled bottles with gasoline, threw them at the Japanese and then fired at them to make these explode. The church burned down because of this, he added.

"Because of these activities, there were less casualties in the north compared to the south," said Augusto Viana, NHI chief of research and publications and heraldry.

He said the squadron also freed 2,000 Americans from a concentration camp in Los Baños, Laguna.

"They came mostly from Guangdong and Fujian provinces. Around 70 died in actual fighting, while the surviving soldiers were only about 20," Viana said. None of the dead fighters, he clarified, were buried at the Chinese cemetery.

Apart from the armed fighters, King said there were also civilian members of the group assigned to solicit donations from fellow Chinese, or to nurse ailing soldiers.

King revealed that there are plans to open the memorial daily to the public and make it one of Manila's destinations for students and tourists.

"It's a big honor," said Suy of the memorial, adding that he would pass on his war stories to his 12 grandchildren.

DID YOU KNOW

THE PHILIPPINE Tuberculosis Society is a nonstock, nonprofit charitable organization established on July 29, 1910 to combat the spread of tuberculosis. One of its main divisions is the Quezon Institute, which was founded in 1938. The organization holds office at QI, which is located on E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue in Quezon City.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

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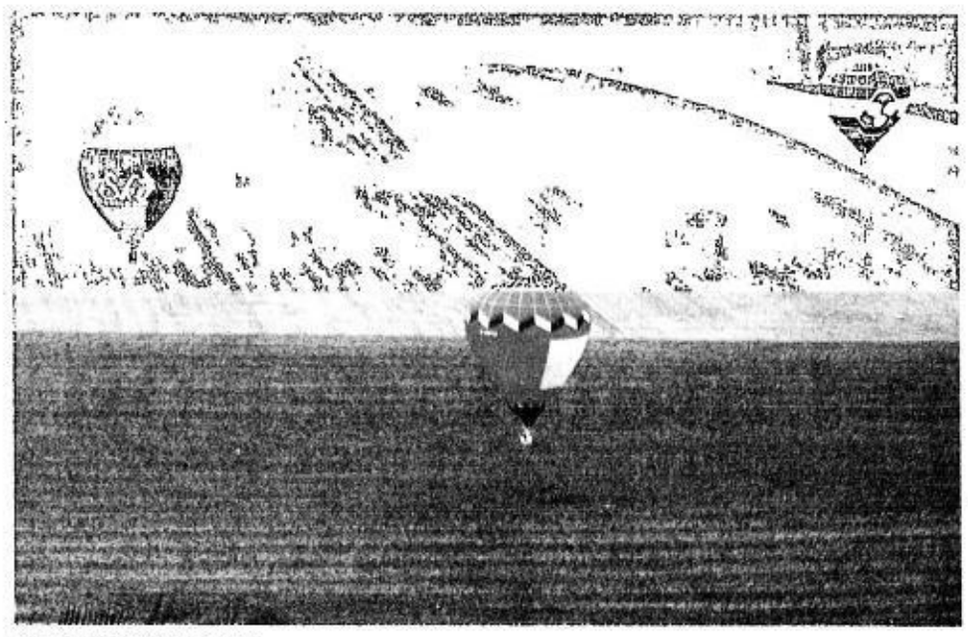


BALLOON SHOW
Hot air balloons fly over a field near the Chambley-Bussieres Air Base in France on July 28, during the "Lorraine Mondial Air Balloons" gathering, the world's largest international balloon event, which brings participants from 70 countries. AFP

Taliban: No more talks on S. Korean hostages

KABUL—TALIBAN REBELS ON SUNDAY ruled out more talks with the Afghan government over their remaining 22 South Korean hostages and said the release of militant prisoners was the only way out of the crisis.

An Afghan team that was supposed to have held more talks with the Taliban on Saturday could not reach the group because of security concerns in Ghazni province, provincial sources said.

The team hoped to persuade the insurgents to free without condition the Christian volunteers they kidnapped from a bus 10 days ago in Ghazni, south of Kabul.

A deputy interior minister on Saturday said that force might be used if talks fail.

Qari Mohammad Yousuf, a Taliban spokesperson, on Sunday warned against use of force and pressed for the freedom of the rebel prisoners as the main condition for the release of the Koreans.

"There is no need for further talks. We have given the government a list of Taliban prisoners who should be released and that is our main demand," he told Reuters by telephone from an undisclosed location.

"The government needs to deliberate on it and if it wants to use force, then it will jeopardize the lives of the hostages and the Taliban will resist till the last gasp of their breath," he added, but did not issue any new deadline.

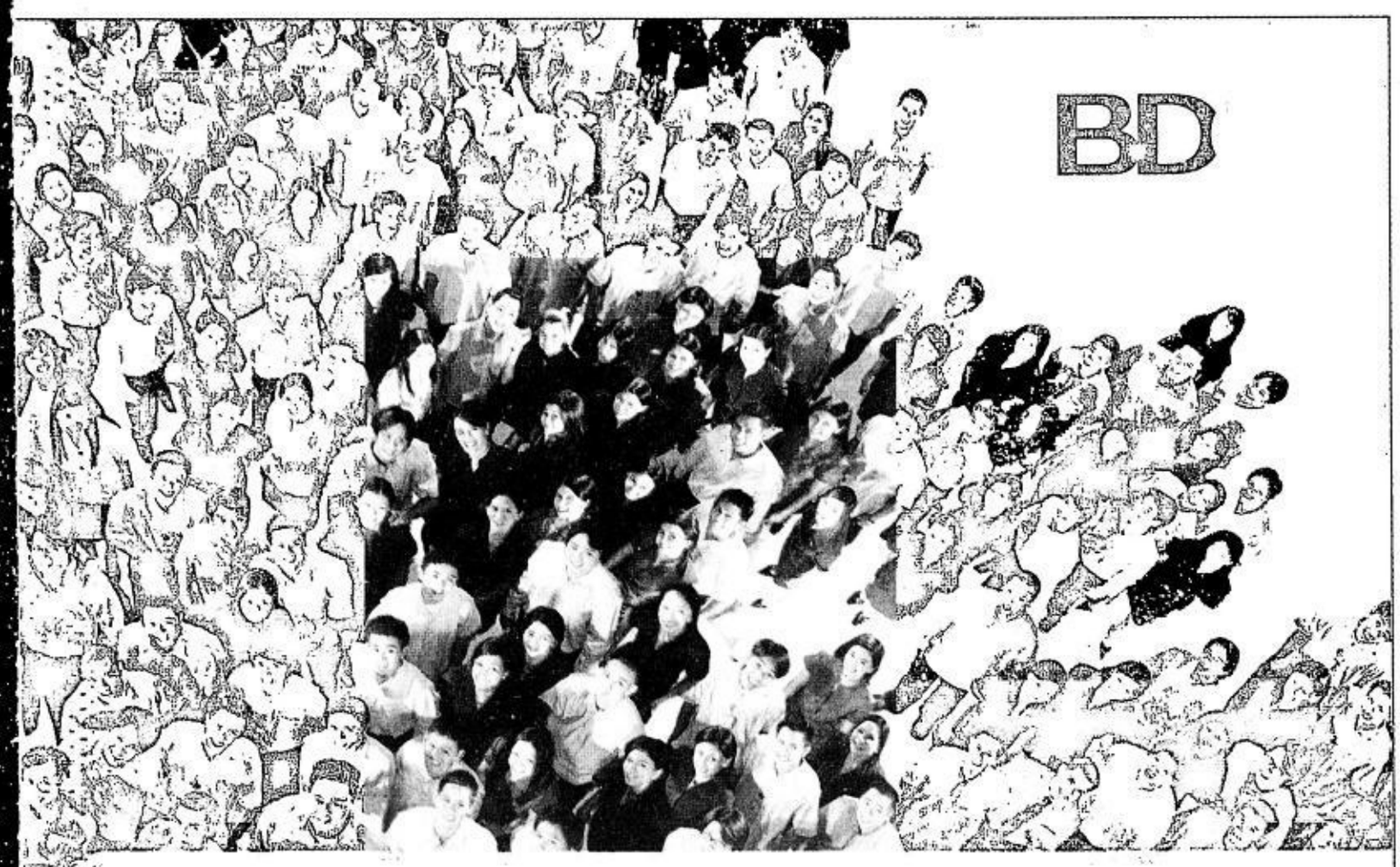
The kidnappers killed the leader of the group on Wednesday, but several Taliban deadlines have passed without the rebels carrying out their threat to kill the rest of the hostages.

Ghazni's governor, Mirajuddin Pathan, said medicines the Korean government had wanted to send for them could not be delivered because the Afghan team could not establish contact with the Taliban.

Pathan said the government did not want to use force to rescue the hostages.

"We have no plan of attack. We are trying to send the delegation for more talks," he told Reuters.

The abduction of the Koreans is the largest kidnapping of foreigners by the Taliban since US-led and Afghan forces overthrew the movement's radical Islamic government in 2001. Reuters



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WORLDBRIEFS

Post: W. House blocked surgeon general's report

WASHINGTON—A Republican political appointee with close White House ties has blocked a 2006 report by the US surgeon general that called for action to tackle global health problems because the document did not promote the administration's policy accomplishments, The Washington Post reported Sunday. Citing current and former public health officials, the newspaper said the report described the link between poverty and poor health and urged the US government to help combat widespread diseases as a key aim of its foreign policy. Three people directly involved in the report's preparation said its publication was blocked by William Steiger, a specialist in education and a scholar of Latin American history whose family has long ties to President George W. Bush and Vice President Richard Cheney, the report said. Steiger has run the Office of Global Health Affairs in the Department of Health and Human Services since 2001. Richard Carmona, who served as surgeon general from 2002 to 2006, recently cited its suppression as an example of the Bush administration's frequent efforts during his tenure to give scientific documents a political twist, the paper reported.

AFP

'Dead zone' in Gulf of Mexico still in top 3

NEW ORLEANS—The oxygen-poor "dead zone" off the Louisiana and Texas coasts is not quite as big as predicted this year, but it is still the third-largest ever mapped, a scientist said. Crabs, eels and other creatures usually found on the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico are swimming in crowds on the surface because there is too little oxygen in their usual habitat, said Nancy Rabalais, chief scientist for northern Gulf hypoxia studies. The 20,460-square-kilometer area has almost no oxygen, a condition called hypoxia. Hypoxia occurs when fresh water pouring in from the Mississippi River floats above the heavier salt water in the Gulf. Algae die and fall to the bottom, where their decay uses oxygen faster than it is brought down from the surface. Eventually, the lower layer holds too little oxygen for fish and other aquatic life.

AP

Lightning kills 5 South Korean climbers

SEOUL—Five South Koreans were killed by lightning in mountains near the capital on Sunday, while six other climbers were injured, KBS news said. Two men and two women were struck and killed near a hill at Bukhan Mountain, northeast of Seoul, when heavy rains swept through the area, the report said. Scores of other climbers have been struck by lightning in the same area in the past. A 48-year-old man was also killed by lightning when he was climbing Surak Mountain bordering Seoul, the television said.

Reuters

US public colleges raise tuition on some degrees

SHOULD AN UNDERGRADUATE studying business pay more than one studying psychology? Should a journalism degree cost more than one in literature? More and more public universities, confronting rising costs and lagging state support, have decided that the answers may be yes and yes.

Starting this fall, juniors and seniors pursuing an undergraduate major in the business school at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, will pay $500 more each semester than their classmates. The University of Nebraska last year began charging engineering students a $40 premium for each hour of class credit.

And Arizona State University this fall will phase in for upperclassmen in the journalism school a $250 per semester charge above the basic $2,411 tuition for in-state students.

Such moves are being driven by the high salaries commanded by professors in certain fields, the expense of specialized equipment and the difficulties of getting state legislatures to approve general tuition increases, university officials say.

"It is something of a trend," said Barmak Nassirian, associate executive director of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.

Even as they embrace such pricing, many officials acknowledge they are queasy about a practice that appears to value one discipline over another or that could result in lower-income students clustering in less expensive fields. *NYT*

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Voters demand change in Japan election

TOKYO—WHEN SHE heard that Japan's pensions agency has misplaced millions of payment records, Keiko Yutani, who is near retirement age, became angry.

On Sunday, she took out her frustration by casting a ballot against Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in key parliamentary elections.

"I said no to the Liberal Democratic Party. I said no to Abe," Yutani, a 60-year-old language teacher, said as she cast her ballot at an elementary school near Tokyo's bustling Tsukiji fish market.

"I'm extremely angry at Abe's Cabinet," Yutani said. "I can't leave my pension funds to them. I voted for opposition candidates this time. I want him to quit."

Abe, an outspoken conservative, took office 10 months ago with high approval ratings as he pledged reforms on sensitive history issues, such as rewriting the US-imposed post-World War II constitution.

But Abe, who at 52 is Japan's youngest leader in modern times, has watched his support dissipate after an incessant series of scandals embroiling his Cabinet.

PRIME Minister Shinzo Abe in a last-ditch effort to woo voters on July 28. REUTERS

Moreover the pensions issue is a very sensitive one in Japan, which has one of the world's most rapidly greying populations. The pensions agency has admitted that for years it misplaced millions of payment records.

Polls show that Abe's Liberal Democrats, who have ruled Japan nearly continuously since 1955, are on course for a major setback in Sunday's election for the upper house of parliament.

Abe has countered that the pension trouble started far before he took office and has pledged to reform the system.

As voters stopped and scrutinized pictures of candidates on billboards outside of the polling station, some were willing to agree with Abe that only the LDP could bring change.

"I'm not satisfied with the government, but I'm afraid things will get worse if others take power," said Kenichiro Nakano, a 65-year-old retiree coming out of the polling station in the scorching sunshine.

"I understand the merit of a power shift in politics like in the United States, but who can replace him and which party can replace the LDP? I don't see anyone," he said.

"I don't expect much. I'm satisfied if things remain unchanged. I want Abe to continue working hard," he added with a slight shrug of his shoulders.

The election is not for the powerful lower house, meaning the LDP can stay in power even if it loses its majority in the upper house Sunday. *AFP*

INDONESIAN, Japanese and French specialists perform an autopsy of a very rare coelacanth fish in Manado, North Sulawesi, on July 27. Coelacanths are among the world's oldest fish species. Their fossil records date back more than 360 million years and suggest the animal has changed little in that time. AFP

Scientists excited by coelacanth caught by Indonesian fisherman

MANADO, INDONESIA—TWO MONTHS ago Indonesian fisherman Justinus Lahama caught a fish so exceptional that an international team of scientists rushed here to investigate.

French experts equipped with sonar and GPS asked Lahama to reconstruct, in his dugout canoe, exactly what it was he did that enabled him to catch a rare coelacanth fish, an awkward-swimming species among the world's oldest.

Last May 19, Lahama and his son Delvy maneuvered their frail canoe into the Malalayang river, on the outskirts of Manado, northern Sulawesi island. Like any other morning, they rowed out to sea and fished within 200 meters of the beach.

"I very quickly unrolled the usual trawl line with three hooks, about 110 meters long, and at the end of three minutes, I felt a large catch," Lahama recounts.

The pull was strong: "I had painful arms—I felt such a resistance, I thought that I was pulling up a piece of coral."

After 30 minutes of effort under the searing tropical sun, he finally saw a fish swishing at a depth of about 20 meters.

He thought he was dreaming, he said, when he saw the creature at the end of his line.

"It was an enormous fish. It had phosphorescent green eyes and legs. If I had pulled it up during the night, I would have been afraid and I would have thrown it back in," he exclaims.

Coelacanths, closely related to lungfish, usually live at depths of 200-1,000 meters. They can grow up to two meters in length and weigh as much as 91 kilograms.

Lahama's catch, 1.3 meters long and weighing 50 kilograms, was only the second ever captured alive in Asia. The first was caught in 1998, also off Manado.

That catch astonished ichtyologists, who until then had been convinced that the last coelacanths were found only off eastern Africa, mainly in the Commoros archipelago. They had been thought to have died out around the time dinosaurs became extinct, until one was found there in 1938.

Their fossil records date back more than 360 million years and suggest that the fish has changed little over that period. *AFP*

Palestinians may return to Gaza

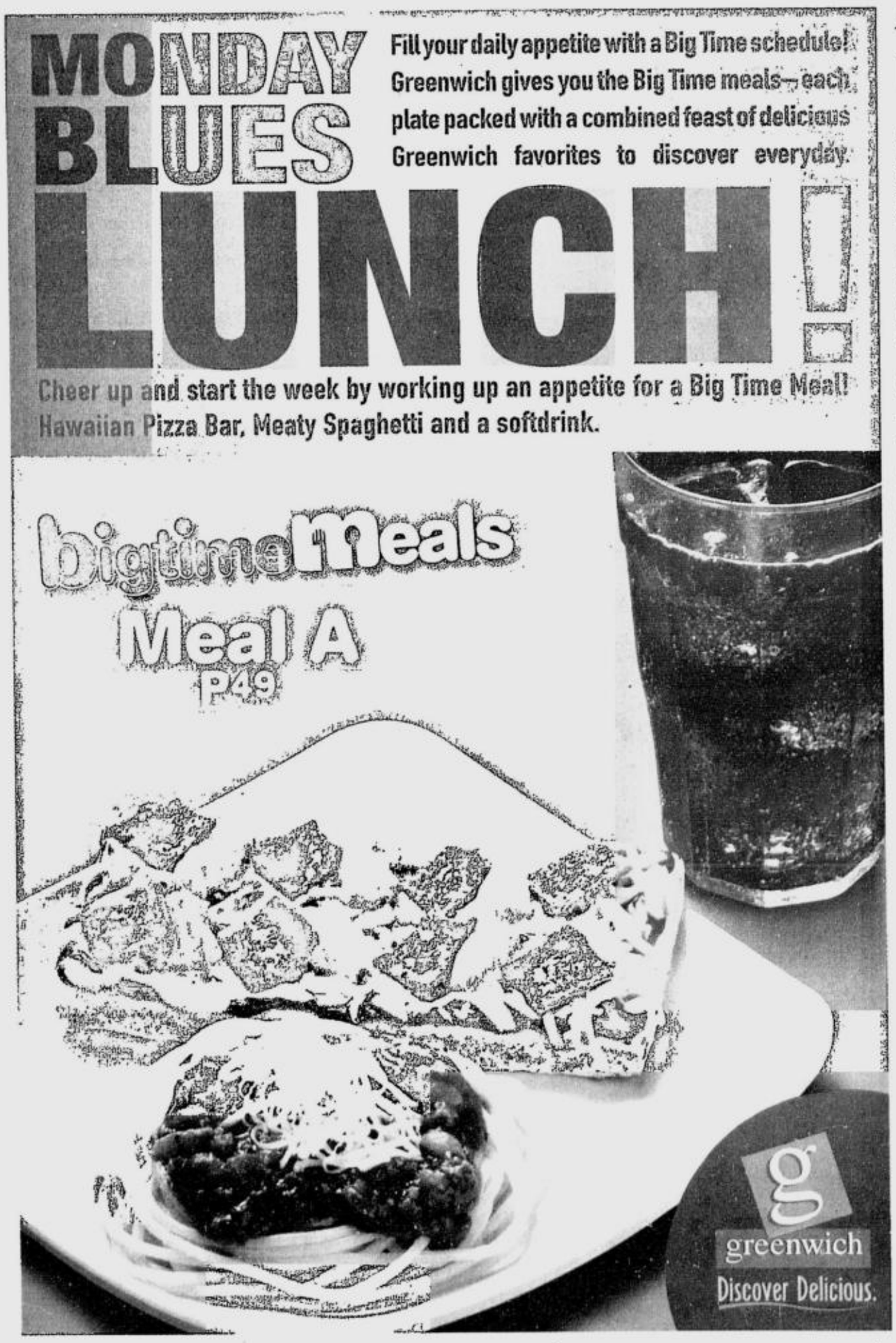
JERUSALEM—FOR SEVEN WEEKS now, up to 6,000 Palestinians trying to return to their homes in the Gaza Strip have been stranded in Egypt, objects of a political struggle between the Palestinian factions of Hamas and Fatah involving both Israel and Egypt.

But there finally appears to be a deal, opposed by Hamas, to let them return, beginning with about 100 on Sunday, with more to follow during the week, Palestinian, Egyptian and Israeli officials said Saturday.

The Palestinians, some of whom had gone to Egypt or elsewhere for medical care or schooling, have been stuck in Rafah, an Egyptian border town, or nearby El Arish because the border crossing between Egypt and Gaza has been shut since June 9. Several hundred, with little money, have been living in harsher conditions in the desert, cared for by various international aid agencies.

The Rafah border crossing, like the separate Karni crossing for goods between Israel and Gaza, was closed because of the fierce fighting in June between Fatah and Hamas. After the Hamas rout of Fatah and takeover of Gaza, these main crossings for people, in Rafah's case, and goods, in Karni's, have been kept shut by Egypt and Israel to isolate Hamas.

The closure has had the quiet support of the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah, who fired the Hamas government and installed a new one in the West Bank. *NYT*



Australia's top cop assails UK police over terror case

SYDNEY—AUSTRALIA'S MOST SENIOR POlice officer said Sunday his force's probe into a doctor linked to failed British terror bombings had faced several obstacles, including wrong information from British police.

In an interview with The Sun-Herald, Mick Keelty said British investigators had provided inaccurate information to Australian officers, who had detained Indian-born doctor Mohamed Haneef on July 2 as he tried to leave Australia.

"There is a lot of confusion at the beginning of any complex investigation... errors in the investigation came to us from the UK... we're all under time pressure," Keelty, the head of the Australian Federal Police, told the newspaper.

Australian police have been accused of acting like "Keystone Cops" in the investigation into Haneef over planned bombings in London and Glasgow, and the criticism has piled intense pressure on Keelty.

Haneef, the second cousin of one of the men linked to the unsuccessful attack on Glasgow airport, had been charged with "reckless" support for a terrorist group.

But the country's top prosecutor on Friday ruled there was insufficient evidence to support the charge and Haneef was released from custody. He is now on his way home to Bangalore.

Keelty said British police had initially told federal police investigators that a mobile phone SIM card purchased by Haneef was found in a jeep allegedly used by his second cousin, Kafeel Ahmed, in the June 30 Glasgow attack, the report said.

It was later revealed the card was found in the home of Kafeel's brother, hundreds of kilometers away in the city of Liverpool.

Keelty said his force had two other things going against them.

"One, Haneef attempted to leave the country. If we had let him go we would have been accused of letting a terrorist escape our shores," he said.

The second was that police could no longer just hold the 27-year-old junior doctor once the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) had advised them there was adequate evidence to charge Haneef.

"We were obliged to charge him," Keelty said. "Had the DPP not said there was sufficient evidence to charge him, the investigation team could have continued detention or let him free while continuing the investigation." *AFP*

Breakthrough in multiple sclerosis biggest in decades

PARIS—INVESTIGATORS ON SUNDAY REported the biggest breakthrough in decades into the genetic drivers for multiple sclerosis (MS), identifying two genes that each boost the risk of developing this tragic disease by up to 30 percent.

In MS, the immune system attacks myelin, the fatty sheath that protects the cells of the central nervous system, rather like plastic insulation that protects electrical cables.

As a result, "short circuits" occur in the body's messaging system, because nerve signals get slowed or blocked. This leads to difficulties in movement and coordination, muscle weakness, cognitive impairment, slurred speech and vision problems.

Until now, investigations of the human genome have turned up only a cluster of variants of genes on Chromosome 6, in the so-called Major Histocompatibility Complex, which regulates the immune system.

But these genes were identified in the mid-1970s, leaving frustrated doctors to hunt for other culprits in the complex cascade of processes involved in MS.

The new suspects play a role in guiding key immune cells, called T cells, which patrol the body for intruders.

They carry the name of interleukin-7 receptor alpha, or IL7R-alpha, located on Chromosome 5, and interleukin-2 receptor alpha (IL2R-alpha) on Chromosome 10, which has previously been associated with Type 1 diabetes.

A single change in the genetic code in IL7-R, and two changes in IL2-R create the dangerous variants.

Each variant appears to boost the risk of MS by between 20 and 30 percent.

"Our finding is very important, because the genetic factors that are already known to be associated with multiple sclerosis only explain less than half of the total genetic basis for the disease," said Simon Gregory, a geneticist at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, who took part in the IL7-R work.

The genetic variants were unearthed, thanks to a comparison of more than 20,000 samples of DNA provided by patients diagnosed with MS and those without the disease, living in the United States and Europe. *AFP*

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SPORTS

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RP five stuns China, keeps Olympic bid

By Francis Ochoa

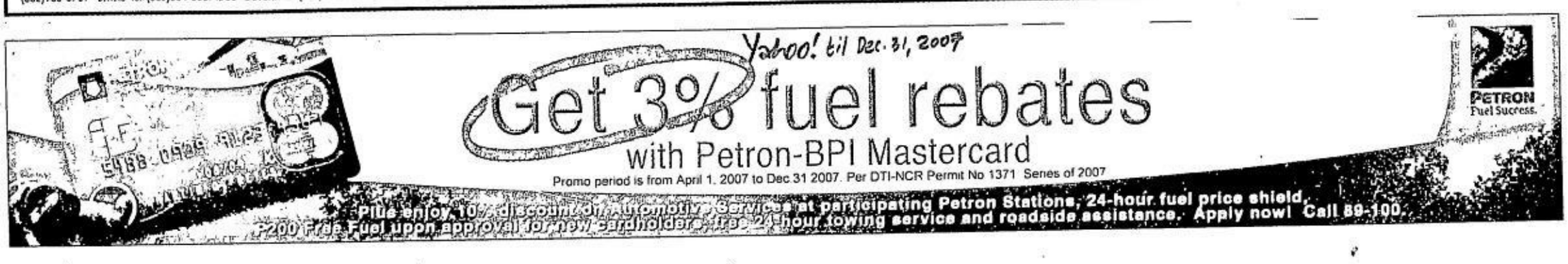
TOKUSHIMA, JAPAN—FACED WITH A MUST-WIN SITUATION against a team it had not beaten in 22 years and falling behind by 13 points midway through the third period, it was easy to pronounce the Philippine Olympic cage bid officially dead.

But Jimmy Alapag and a band of heroes emerged from a desperate situation and sparked a team running on nothing but heart as San Miguel-RP came from behind for a stirring 79-74 victory over China Sunday to keep its Beijing dreams afloat in the Fiba Asia men's basketball championship at the Asty Tokushima.

It was the first victory for a Philippine squad against China since 1985 when Ron Jacobs engineered the fall of the Great Wall to give RP its last title in what was then known as the ABC tournament.

"We played 40 minutes of pure heart," said National coach Chot Reyes. "No matter how many points

RP FIVE/ A30



Shooting woes fatal for Pinoys

By Francis T. J. Ochoa

TOKUSHIMA, JAPAN—THERE ALWAYS IS A morning after.

And in the case of the national team whose bid for an Olympic stint teetered close to the edge of collapse after a loss to an Iran squad that played with a sense of mission the first 30 minutes and a sense of desperation the last 10, that morning after came Sunday, hours before San Miguel-RP plunged into action in a do-or-die game against China.

There was little of the somber, funereal atmosphere the night before, the one that clouded the Philippine delegation after a 75-69 defeat to the Iranians at the start of the Fiba Asia men's basketball championship at the Asty Tokushima.

In its place was an optimism no one could trace where it came from.

"We will find a way to advance to the quarterfinals," said Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas executive director Patrick Gregorio.

Jittery squad

Perhaps, after all the elementary layups missed, the bungled dunks, the wayward dribbles and the off-target passes, the country's basketball officials saw something that was hardly evident in the jittery squad that hammered the rim with bricks.

"The boys played really hard," said SBP president Manny V. Pangilinan during breakfast with PBA chair and SBP vice president Ricky Vargas, Bacolod Rep. and POC vice president Monico Puentevella, SBP board of trustee Michel Lhuillier and San Miguel-RP team manager Robert Non.

To their credit, they did.

"This team never stops fighting," said national coach Chot Reyes. "We never quit. Even when [Asi] Taulava sprained [his ankle], five fouls on Caguioa, Seigle was out, Alapag was out, we were not going to stop fighting."

The five players Reyes lost were indeed significant: Taulava and Dondon Hontiveros, who was ejected after committing two unsportsmanlike fouls, are the team's co-captains. Seigle is the wild card of the team, a player who can score at will and wasn't scouted much by the opposition because of his being in the injured list during shape-up tournaments the team joined in.

Caguioa is the team's resident top scorer while Alapag was the Most Valuable Player in the recent Smart Manila 4-Nation Invitational Tournament hosted and won by the Philippines.

"It's a pity that Greek referee chose to decide the ballgame [with a technical foul]," Reyes said.

Technical foul

The fiery mentor was referring to a technical foul slapped by the referee on the RP bench with just 57 seconds remaining and the Nationals trailing by just a point, 69-68.

That resulted in a pair of free throws that Mohhamad Nikkhah coolly sank for a three-point buffer. But to say the game was decided there is missing the point as badly as the Filipinos missed point-blank shots.

In the first place, a few plays before the "T" the referee already had warned an animated Reyes to keep his bench—and his sideline calisthenics—under control.

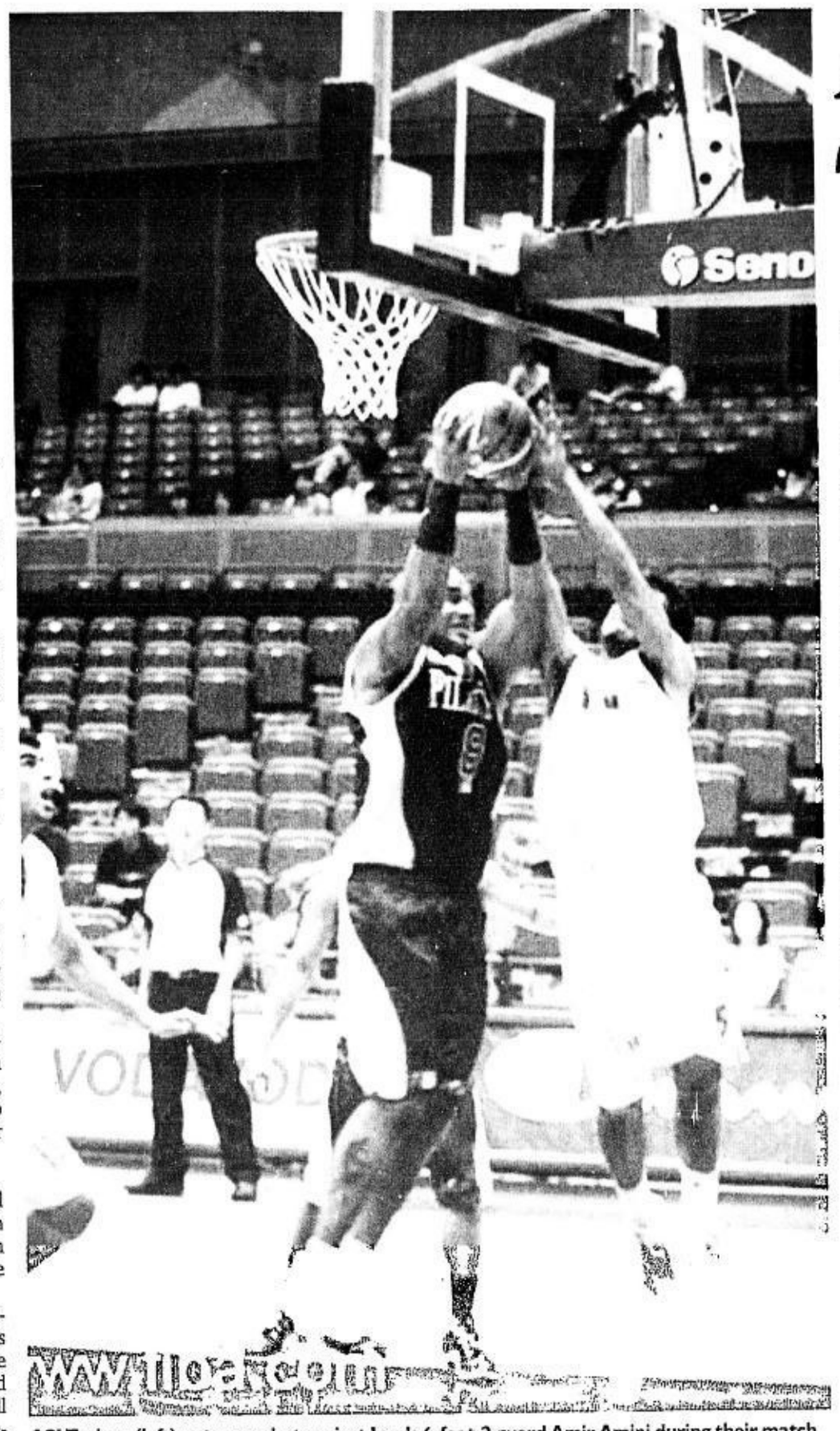
Iran's Serbian coach, Toroman Rijko defined the parameters of the loss much, much better:

"We learned our lesson," Rijko said. "They beat us by 10 in [the William Jones Cup] in Taipei. We stopped their outside players this time."

San Miguel-RP's performance from the field hovered around the 20-percent mark. And no one typified that anemic shooting than the top three outside shooters of the squad: Caguioa, Seigle and Alapag combined for 7-of-35 from the field, or exactly 20 percent.

Those seven field goals represented almost half the number of shots the Filipinos made. San Miguel-RP only had 15 field goals the entire match.

The team only managed 36 points from the field and got 33 from the stripe, where it missed 10 free shots. Iran, on the other hand, only made 25 free throws out of 49 attempts. If both teams actually made all their free throws, the result would have been Iran 99, San Miguel-RP 79.



ASI Taulava (left) puts up a shot against Iran's 6-foot-2 guard Amir Amini during their match Saturday in the Fiba Asia men's basketball championship in Tokushima, Japan.

Archers nip Tigers; FEU rips Ateneo

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE DE LA SALLE GREEN ARCHERS LOOKED GOOD WITH THEIR new shaven heads and showed they can play even better against the defending champions.

The Archers recovered from back-to-back losses with a 90-86 overtime victory against the University of Santo Tomas Tigers in the UAAP men's basketball competition yesterday at the Araneta Coliseum.

Veteran guard JV Casio scored on a drive in the dying seconds to extend the match, 79-all, then fired six of La Salle's 11 points in the extra period.

"It was a good thing our style and brand of play showed," said Archers coach Franz Pumaren, who also sported a slightly bald pate, as a sign of unity with his boys following La Salle's successive losses to University of the East and Ateneo.

"It's the concept that I've been looking since the start of the season," added Pumaren, whose Archers rose from a 16-point deficit, 18-34. "We had no fire and passion, [but this time] we played with a lot of intensity and desire."

The Archers settled at 4-2 together with archrival Ateneo as the Blue Eagles absorbed a stunning 77-64 loss from the Far Eastern Tamaraws in the second game.

Benedict Fernandez shot a career-high 18 points in the game that the Tamaraws surprisingly dominated almost all throughout.

The Tamaraws, who moved up to fourth place at 3-2, converted a season-high 30 points off the Eagles' 23 turnovers.

"Again it was our defense," said FEU coach Glenn Capacio. "[Ateneo] had a hard time adjusting to our zone because we were quick."

Before Casio drove to the basket with 2.6 seconds left to send the game into overtime., the Tigers seemed headed for a victory with a 6-0 charge capped by Jervy Cruz's low-post bucket with 6.4 seconds left for a 79-77 advantage.

But Casio's three-point play sparked a run that pushed the Archers ahead, 89-83, with 1:15 minutes to go.

GAMES THURSDAY
(Ninoy Aquino Stadium)
2 p.m.—UE vs FEU (Srs)
4 p.m.—Adamson vs UP (Srs)

The scores:

First Game

LA SALLE 90—Tang 23, Mangahas 14, Casio 14, Walsham 11, Villanueva 7, Cua 5, Co 5, Malabes 3, Ferdinand 2, Ilad 2, Maierhofer 2, Barua 2, Lee 0.

UST 86—Cruz 22, Ababou 14, Mirza 12, Canlas 9, Allera 8, Espiritu 7, Cuan 6, Dizon 4, Cortez 4, Gile 0, Taylor 0.

Quarters: 10-14, 28-38, 60-62, 79-79 (reg), 90-86 (OT)

Second Game

FEU 77—Fernandez 18, Cawaling 14, Baracael 12, Ramos 7, Cervantes 6, Sanga 5, Barroca 5, Reyes 3, Allsbo 2, Knuttel 2, Cabagnot 2, Adolfo 1, Tanuan 0, Abaring 0.

ATENEO 64—Tiu 18, Long 10, Salamat 9, Arao 7, Nkemakolam 6, Al-Hussaini 6, Reyes 5, Monfort 3, Baclao 0, Sumalinog 0, Escueta 0, Laterre 0, Barracoso 0.

Quarters: 14-16, 39-27, 57-46, 77-64

Why The Lion is out of the Guinness Tour

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

THERE'S ALWAYS A THRILL IN SEEING Alex "The Lion" Pagulayan sizzle and roar in big international pool tournaments.

But there will be no Pagulayan to do his wild thing, at least in the next leg of the Guinness Tour.

He has been scratched out after the Singapore leg.

There were conflicting reports on why Pagulayan, the 2004 World 9-ball champion and the 2005 US Open 9-ball titlist, has been withdrawn.

Actually, Pagulayan protested and claimed he had already purchased a round-trip ticket to Shanghai in anticipation of his entry in the China leg by virtue of his semifinal finish in the Singapore leg recently.

Pagulayan blasted the Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines (BCSP) and claimed his ouster would definitely affect his game in the ongoing Cebu Open where he is one of the favorites.

BCSP president Ernesto Fajardo stated that the decision to replace Pagulayan was a prerogative of the BCSP executive committee.

The BCSP also e-mailed a statement to this reporter to clarify why Pagulayan has been withdrawn from the four-man RP team competing in the Guinness 9-ball tour set in China Aug. 3-5.

Kindly share the statement:

***

Last Thursday, July 26, the Billiards & Snooker Congress of the Philippines, through its Executive Committee and Board of Directors, decided to withdraw the name of Alex Pagulayan as Filipino participant from the Shanghai Leg of the Guinness Pool Tour on Aug. 3-5.

That decision was made after a review of Pagulayan's conduct during his semifinal match with Malaysia's Ibrahim Amir in the Singapore Leg last July 13-15. We found his actuations during the match unworthy and unacceptable for a representative of a country that is regarded today as "the epicenter of international pool." His antics amounted to "sharking"—the pool term for acts to disrupt and disarm one's opponent in order to win. So gross were his actions that in the end, Ibrahim repaid him in kind. To many, including not a few Filipinos, it seemed only just that the Malaysian won the match.

The BSCP believes that Pagulayan's behavior demanded at the very least that he no longer be sent to the tournament that he had disrespected. His presence in Shanghai would only serve to remind our Asian neighbors of his behavior. Hence, the decision to replace him with Jeffrey de Luna, a Filipino player much prized by the tour organizers.

Playing in the Guinness Tour is a privilege, not a right. It is our sports body's policy to choose players who can do honor for our country and our sport, and allocate slots as fairly as possible. Two times out of four legs, Pagulayan was accorded the privilege; both times he failed. And it is doubly unfortunate that he did not play and lose with grace.

With respect to the wild statements that Pagulayan has made to the media following his recall, we have this to say:

1. His claim that he was being replaced as Philippine representative in the Guinness Tour because he refused to play in a TV program is false. The supposed meeting he alludes to—and the supposed invitation made to him—never took place. There was an attempt to arrange a meeting with him, but he said he could not talk until he came back from Cebu on July 28. So he does not know what we wanted to discuss with him (his Singapore behavior and our billiards program, among others), and we did not hear any of his mercenary demands.

2. His claim that he sacrificed a place in the International Pool Tour (IPT) in 2005 for the sake of playing for the Philippines in the Southeast Asian Games is a lie. He was not invited to the IPT then. He only became an IPT member in 2006. When he became an IPT member, he promptly told the BSCP that he would not play for the country in the Asian Games in Doha in 2006. Later, he dangled the possibility of playing if he would be given money. The money request was turned down.

3. His statement about being used by BSCP in order to make money off him is bewildering. In the two BSCP national championship events he participated in, neither the sports body nor the promoter made any money. We do our utmost to find sponsors and benefactors to sustain major events in the country, but so far income has not been enough to cover costs. So this charge of exploitation is both absurd and incredibly ungrateful for someone who has earned over a million pesos from our billiards program.

That program continues with the 2007 and 2008 World Pool Championship, the San Miguel Asia-Pacific Pool Tour, the 2008 WPA World 10-Ball Championship, the Philippine Pool Tour, and Pool Showdown, a reality TV show. In all these, the format is always competitive pool. The BSCP and the promoters will not offer money guarantees to any player, no matter how inflated his ego. It would be unfortunate, given Pagulayan's mercenary demands, if he will miss these major pool events in the international pool calendar.

RP five stuns China, keeps Olympic bid

From page A29

we were down by, we never gave up hope."

Mark Caguioa, who struggled in the worst way a star player could struggle in a crucial defeat to Iran, looked headed for a repeat performance three-and-a-half quarters into Sunday's survival match before hitting big baskets down the stretch, including a layup in the last 8.6 ticks that gave the Filipinos a 77-74 edge.

Kelly Williams then capped the comeback with a steal as China tried to set gunner Chen Cen up for a tying triple.

"This team can be down by five, 11 or 20 and it will never stop fighting," Chot added.

Alapag personified the spirit that came to fore when no amount of coaching or any other technical basketball stuff could help solve the way China was slowly pulling the plugs off the life-support system that was keeping the Filipinos' quarterfinal bid alive.

With time winding down in the third quarter, Alapag, who kept San Miguel-RP within striking deficit when China tried to rip the game wide open in the first half, quarter-backed the Nationals to within a point from 13 down entering the fourth period.

And when the final quarter came, San Miguel-RP played like a team hell-bent on accomplishing a mission, finding heroes from all over the court to wrest control of the game.

Jayjay Helterbrand, who briefly spelled Alapag early in the last quarter, gave the Philippines its first taste of the lead at 58-57 on a running jumper. When San Miguel-RP fell behind by two, Kerby Raymundo knocked in six points as the Philippines took the lead for good, 68-62, 5:24 remaining.

"The Philippine team showed a lot more experience in handling the crucial moments of the game," said Chinese coach Adiljian, through an interpreter.

"Our young players played well but the Philippines simply played better," added the ringleader of a vaunted mean red machine in the late '80s and early '90s that started China's domination of the Asian basketball scene and shredded many a Philippine national team.

There were still some tense moments in the stretch.

Bian Qang hit a triple to move China to within a point, 68-67, but Alapag, who wound up leading San Miguel-RP with 25 points, responded with a pressure-heavy trey that restored a four-point cushion. With 18 ticks remaining, Chen hit a triple that moved the Chinese to within a point again, but that was when Caguioa drove in to ice the game.

"We played for honor and respect and for the people back home who have pinned their hopes on us," said Reyes, whose wards can virtually seal a quarterfinal seat when it takes on powerhouse Jordan Monday at 6 p.m.

Jordan was playing Iran at presstime.

China was virtually knocked out of contention for a quarterfinal slot after absorbing its second loss in as many games.

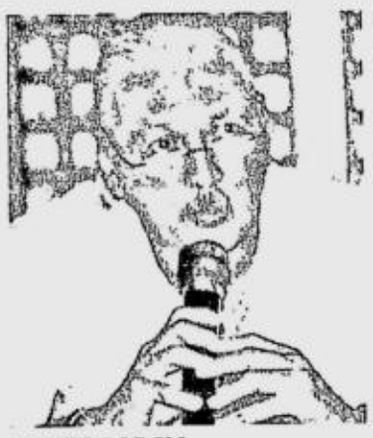
The scores:

SAN MIGUEL-RP 79—Alapag 25, Caguioa 16, Raymundo 12, Williams 11, Hontiveros 7, Taulava 4, Helterbrand 4, Pennisi 0, Norwood 0.

CHINA 74—Yi 14, B. Wang 14, Li 13, Bian 10, Zhang 9, Chen 6, Yang 3, Han 3, Y. Wang 2.

Quarters: 19-25, 38-49, 56-57, 79-74

127 bets seeking more SEAG slots


RICHIE GARCIA

By June Navarro

A TOTAL OF 127 ATHLETES from 40 disciplines are training doubly hard to impress the Philippine Olympic Committee and their respective national sports associations and boost their chances of making it to the national contingent for this year's Southeast Asian Games.

Commissioner Ritchie Garcia of the Philippine Sports Commission said the national hopefuls will undergo specialized performance testing to determine their skill levels after failing the criteria set by the SEAG Task Force.

Garcia, one of the PSC's representatives in the joint task force with the POC, said that 482 athletes have already qualified based on the initial guidelines drawn up by the task force.

But they still have to prove their worth for the duration of the training period.

"Nobody's sure so we're still giving the other 127 athletes a chance to prove their worth," said Garcia, who will sit as Philippine deputy chef de mission during the SEAG set in Thailand on Dec. 6-16.

"Who knows? Given the proper breaks, they could even beat and replace the athletes who have already qualified so we're giving them all the chances to prove themselves," he added.

Garcia said the NSAs are tasked to employ tests to measure the capability of each aspirant.

"The result of the tests should be tantamount to a SEA Games bronze medal. Otherwise, we'll just send them home," said Garcia.

In athletics alone, the Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association wants to tap 20 more athletes aside from the 20 who have already qualified under the five-point criteria by the SEAG task force.

The PSC has earmarked P50 million for the country's SEAG participation. The amount will be spent for about 400 to 500 athletes and 200 officials at the most.

Medalists in the 2005 SEA Games hosted by the Philippines and last year's Doha Asian Games make up the bulk of the 482 national team prospects, who are a cinch to make it unless their performance levels take a sudden dip prior to the submission of the final roster on Oct. 8.

Making their debut in the games, rugby, futsal and polo were automatically integrated in the qualified roster while four slots in badminton and a team for football were also included.

Garcia explained that football could send either its men's or women's team while badminton could name four players at the most as token representatives in the games as approved by the SEAG Federation Council.

Saints, Hawks trounce rivals

ST. CLARE COLLEGE CALOOCAN dumped Holy Angel University, 87-67, while University of Manila subdued Centro Escolar University, 67-63, to bolster their chances in the 2007 NAASCU men's basketball tournament at the Casa Milan and New Era gyms, respectively.

Powered by Mitch Lodia and Gerald Geraldino, the Caloocan-based Saints of coach Jimmy Mariano and Dr. Ernesto Jay Adalem, went on a furious third-quarter run to outscore the Flyers, 25-10, and turn a close contest into a rout.

Lodia and Geraldino finished with 23 points apiece for St.Clare, which forged a three-way tie for the lead with last year's runner-up STI College and New Era University with three straight victories.

Backing up Lodia and Geraldino were Archie Cruz with 17 and Julius Laurel with 11.

Over at the New Era gym, the Hawks rode on the clutch baskets of Ryeon de los Trinos and Frank Martin Bonus to repulse the Scorpions and register their second win in three matches.

De los Trinos nailed a three-point shot and Bonus added a short jumper as the Ato Tolentino-mentored Hawks staved off the Scorpions' last-ditch rally.

Onofre Napiza finished with 16 points and Bonus added 12 points for UM, which is bidding to regain the title it held the first five years.

Miguel Lalota carried the fight for CEU with 20 points.

The scores:

New Era gym

UM 67—Napiza 16, Bonus 12, Malinao 12, Assuncion 6, De Vera 6, Delos Trinos 4, De Leon 4, Guimpatan 4, Mulawin 1, Sadsad 0, Paguio 0.

CEU 63—Lalota 20, Magno 16, Manajero 10, Salamat 5, Camacho 5, Zapanta 3, Macasaet 2, Ignabi 0, Villamayor 0.

Quarters: 14-13, 27-25, 46-47, 67-63.

Casa Milan gym

ST. CLARE 87—Geraldino 23, Lodia 23, Cruz 17, Laurel 11, Buquid 4, manio 3, Valenzona 2, Percibigan 2, Labatos 2, Diswe 0, Tolete 0, Martinez 0.

HOLY ANGEL 67—Francisco 24, Cuizon 23, Cano 4, Abuy 4, Porras 4, Morales 4, Teodoro 2, Cordero 0, Gopez 0, Lacson 0, Bituin 0, Julian 0.

Quarters: 28-28, 43-41, 68-51, 87-67.

Laborte-Torres beach volley queens

CLARK FIELD, PAMPANGA—VARSITY coach Sheryl Laborte and Bacolod-based student Jenny Torres were a perfect combination in the third leg of the 2007 Petron Ladies Beach Volleyball Tournament at the Clearwater Country Club here.

They relied on good timing to repulse collegiate rivals Mary Jane Porcia and Mary Anne Calleja, 21-14, 21-7, to sweep their best-of-three finals showdown.

"Smart moves and good strategy did it for us," said Laborte, coach of the Miriam college varisity volleyball squad. "They were training their shots on Jenny but she came through and hit from short angles."

Laborte and Torres, a 21-year-old Criminology student at the UNO-R in Bacolod City, extricated themselves from a 2-6 deficit in the first set behind Sheryl's big serves.

After taking a 15-8 edge off a 7-2 run, the pair never looked back after Torres began hitting crosscourt volleys and placement shots.

JENNY Torres (left) and Sheryl Laborte display their trophies.

In the second set, smashes and drop shots at the net by Torres gave her team a 14-4 spread, which they kept till the end.

Laborte and Torres shared the P10,000 top purse.

The beach volley event was organized by former Philippine Sports Commission Commissioner Tisha Abundo. Solar Sports Entertainment will air the tournament with the assistance of Smart.

It was Sheryl's second crown after she and sister Michelle won the Battle of Champion title last year.

Both finalists finished unbeaten after seven games. Laborte and Torres hurdled their semifinal rivals, Jessical Ticala and Angelica Quinlog of Philippine School of Business Administration, 21-5.

Porcia and Calleja, who are students at the ACSAT, needed to hurdle Ateneo pair Asia Urquico and Jessica Morado twice in the semis, first with a 21-19 triumph and then a 21-13 beating.

Squires seek 6th win as NCAA jrs resumes

FIRST ROUND RULER Letran tries to tighten its hold of the overall lead as it faces University of Perpetual Help today at the start of the second round eliminations of the NCAA junior's basketball tournament at The Arena in San Juan.

GAMES TODAY
(*The Arena, San Juan*)
12 noon—Letran vs Perpetual Help (Jrs)
1:30 p.m.—San Beda vs St. Benilde
3 p.m.—San Sebastian vs JRU

The Squires and Altalettes, who are winless in five games, cross paths in the first game at noon.

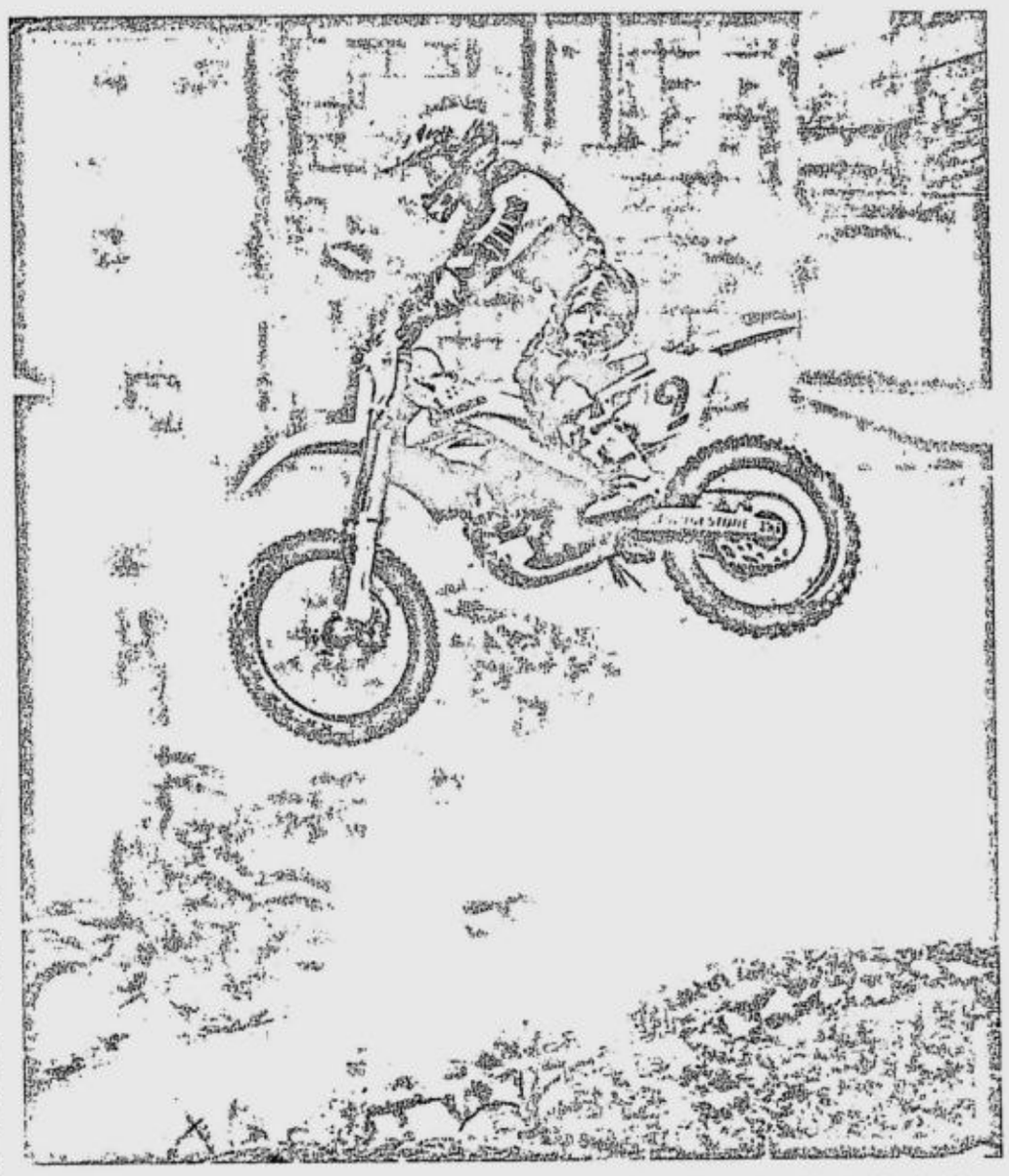
In other games, San Beda College meets CSB-La Salle Greenhills at 1:30 p.m., while defending champion San Sebastian College battles Jose Rizal University at 3 p.m.

The Staglets and Red Cubs share second with similar 3-2 cards, while the Light Bombers are Junior Archers are at fourth with 2-3 marks.

After losing their season opener, Letran won its next next five to top the first round.

The deadly trio of John Noble and Alas siblings Kevin and Kristoffer are expected to lead anew the Squires' attack.

Kevin Alas and Noble are third and fourth-best scorers in the junior's division with averages of 25.6 and 21.2 points per game, respectively. Ryan Buenafe of San Sebastian leads the scoring with 35.4 points per game.


KENNETH San Andres soars during the Asian Supercross Cross Championships in Taguig City.

San Andres tops 'moto'

YOUNG SENSATION KENNETH SAN ANDRES shook off grief to rule the Pro Open of the National Motocross Championships and emerged the region's third best rider in the FIM Asian Supercross Championships at the Fast Track Circuit in Taguig City recently.

Kenneth, who was mourning the death of his uncle Martin at the time of the event, bested Glenn Aguilar for the first time in a national series. Jovy Saulog placed third.

San Andres placed second to Aguilar in the first heat, but charged back with a masterful half-a-lap victory in the second heat. Kenneth eventually clinched the Pro Open tiara as the second heat carries a heavier weight of the two.

"I dedicate my victory to my late uncle, who must be beaming with pride right now wherever he maybe," said San Andres, who is being supported by Oakley, Bridgestone Tires, HJC Helmet, Fox, Renthal, Alpine Star, Inside Racing Magazine and JBS Motorcycle Shop.

Kenneth's father-coach Junjun, made it a double celebration for the San Andreses after winning the Veterans' Class.

Takayama up

RISING STAR MIKE Takayama bested Bebien Jabien, 10-3, yesterday to barge into the semifinals of the Cebu Open 9-ball at the SM Cebu City Cebu Trade Hall.

TAKAYAMA

The 18-year-old Takayama thus assured himself of at least P20,000 in the event staking P160,000 to the champion.

"I still can't believe that I can make it to the final four but thanks God," said Takayama, amember of Bugys Promotion stable. "I just played my very best."

Takayama, who beat former Southeast Asian Games medalist and Jakarta-based Victor Arpilleda, 9-3, in the "Sweet 16" will face top seed Alex Pagulayan in the final four.

Pagulayan defeated Reymar Naraiso, 9-2, in the round-of-16 and 2007 Battle of Scandinavia 9-ball winner Roberto Gomez, 10-4, in the quarterfinals.

Antonio Gabica and reigning national open champion Lee Vann Corteza hurdled their respective rivals to complete the semis cast.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

Enriquez, Arias rule Milo Marathon Bohol leg

WOMEN'S 21K champion Merlita Arias and runners-up Genalyn Jaum (2003) and Edna Adame (1951) after the Tagbilaran City leg of the 31st National Milo Marathon yesterday. With them are (from right) Milo's Pat Goc-ong, local race organizer Dionisio Balite, Provincial Board Member Jose Veloso and Tagbilaran City Vice Mayor Jose Veloso.

TAGBILARAN CITY—RUNNERS FROM CEBU dominated yesterday's elimination race of the 31st National Milo Marathon held here in front of the provincial capitol building.

Riez Enriquez, a student of University of Southern Philippines Foundation, and Merlita Arias topped the 21K run in contrasting fashions.

Enriquez stormed ahead with two kilometers to go to secure his first leg title in one hour, 21 minutes and 12 seconds.

The 22-year-old Enriquez, who placed second to Joseph Penales in the Tagbilaran City leg last year, said he was surprised when he pulled away near the finish and eventually won.

Early leader Rogelio Abay-abay of Carmen, Bohol tried to reclaim the lead but had no more to give and settled for second place in 1:21:19.

Placing third was Eugene Delposo of Cebu City at 1:24:04 even as Penales dropped to fourth place and lost a chance to return to the grand finals on Nov. 18 in Metro Manila.

Arias, a six-time leg winner, prevailed in 1:57:57 in this annual foot race held in partnership with Bayview Park Hotel, Adidas and Department of Tourism. Enriquez and Arias each pocketed P10,000 for the win.

Placing second and third were Genalyn Jaum (2:02:49) and Edna Adame (2:07:50) who also made it to the 42K finals.

The top finishers in the men's 5K fun run were Genesis Ebal (18:38), Charlot Cutarra (19:26) and Manfred Perez (19:34) and Mary Jessamyn Arcales (25:24), Juliet Azucena (25:52) and Nora Bentillo (26:27) in the women's category..

Bayron posts Pilipinas Amateur Tour double

SILANG, CAVITE—MAKE IT A double for Rufino Bayron.

Proving that his victory in the kickoff leg was no fluke, Bayron carded a final round one-over par 73 on Friday to rule the second leg of the Pilipinas Amateur Golf Tour presented by Samsung at the Riviera Golf and Country Club's Couples course here.

Counting his earlier rounds of 77-73, the 25-year-old Bayron posted a 223 total to nip Raymund Sangil by one shot for the Championship Division title and serve notice of his strong bid for a national team slot as the same course will host the Philippine team qualifying tilt next month.

Sangil, the two-day leader with a 75 and 70, skied to a 79 and settled for runner-up honors with a 224 that enabled the younger brother of reigning national amateur champion Jay, to duplicate his victory in the inaugural leg at Pueblo de Oro in Cagayan de Oro City.

The Class A title went to Rodel Mangulabnan, who carded a 77 and 76 for a 153 total, two shots better than Chay Moreno's 155 built on a 78 and 77.

Danny Pizarro matched the 85 of South Korea's Kang Hyung-il to snare the Class B plum with a 169 total. Pizarro opened with an 84 against Kang's 85.

In contrast with the tight fight in the higher divisions, lopsided wins were the order of the day in Classes C and D.

Noli Lopez ruled Class C after scoring an 82-85 for a 167 aggregate, six strokes better than Korean Choi Woo-hyuk's 173 on rounds of 85 and 88. Mark Lao was even more imposing in Class D with twin 90s and a 180, finishing 18 shots away from Elmer Geconcillo.

Organized by the Professional Sports Management Inc., the tour's major backers are Callaway Golf, Mizuno, and Titleist-Footjoy by Dynamic Sports Corp.

BAYRON

Makati derby today

ACE FIGHTERS WILL BE FIELDED TODAY AS Metro Manila's bigtime cockers clash in Makati Coliseum's-cock derby, beginning at 6 p.m. The derby dangles a guaranteed prize of P300,000 while entry fee is P8,800. Ram Lopez (R and A), Amor Salvanera (Kalayaan) and Diko Cesar (RGA), who topped the WTJ 3-cock event last July 23, lead 35 participants that include Richard Bates, Efren Canlas, Jun Pascual, Super Pacman entry, Mayor Nene Aguilar, Louie Cua, Boy de Roca, Eddie and Pete Ison, Lito Roque and Butchoy Olano. Meanwhile, the annual Richard L. Bates 7-stag derby with P700,000 in guaranteed prize at stake, sizzles on Aug. 27 and 29. Screening of stags (eight to ten months only), is still ongoing. Call 824-0237 and 0916-7238412 (Verna Bates) for appointment.

Tour in Contador's bag

ANGOULEME, FRANCE—ALBERTO CONTADOR of Spain all but locked up a Tour de France victory Saturday by holding off his top rival in the final time trial, a day before the doping-marred race ends in Paris.

American rider Levi Leipheimer, a Discovery Channel teammate of Contador, won the 19th stage with a time of 1 hour, 2 minutes, 44 seconds in the 55.5-kilometer (35-mile) race against the clock from Cognac to Angouleme.

Contador lost most of his lead but still holds a 23-second advantage over Cade Evans of Australia. Barring a crash or other mishap, the 24-year-old Spaniard looks likely to bring home the yellow jersey after the 20th and final stage—a 146-kilometer (90.7-mile) ride from Marcoussis to Paris' Champs-Elysees on Sunday.

Contador would be the Tour's youngest winner since Jan Ullrich in 1997.

The last stage is seen as a largely processional ride, with few chances for breakaways.

"I'm eager to go home and celebrate," said Contador, who was encouraged during the stage by seven-time champion Lance Armstrong, who has ties to Discovery and was riding behind in a team car. "It wasn't an easy day."

Evans conceded that he had lost, attributing his defeat to having fallen back in the Peyresourde climb in the Pyrenees at the beginning of the third week.

"I was close to winning," he said.

Contador's Discovery Channel teammates are likely to go all out Sunday to protect his lead, and ensure that rivals don't overtake him on the ride up to the finish on the famed Paris avenue.

"We've won this Tour de France—barring a freak accident tomorrow," Leipheimer said of his team. "I am very happy for Alberto."

If all holds, Contador will win with the second-closest margin of victory ever at the Tour.

SPAIN'S Alberto Contador is all set to claim his first Tour de France win. AFP

The record was American Greg Lemond's eight-second margin over France's Laurent Fignon in 1989.

Contador came into the stage with a 1 minute, 50 second-lead over Evans and Saturday's big question was whether he could hold off the Australian.

Leipheimer, who had come in 2:49 back of Contador in third place overall, now trails him by 31 seconds. It was his first stage win at the Tour.

"I didn't know in the warm-up that I'd be so good," Leipheimer said. "It's a special day and today I had the best legs of my life."

Meanwhile, Kazakh riderAlexandre Vinokourov's backup sample has confirmed the original finding of a banned blood transfusion. He was forced out of the Tour on Tuesday when it was revealed he had failed a doping test. *AP*

Ateneo, LS rift widens over protest

By Jasmine W. Payo

ATENEO COACH NORMAN BLACK took the blame, but maintained that his team immediately corrected its mistake.

"Either way, it's my responsibility and I take the blame," Black said yesterday, a day after the De La Salle Green Archers officially placed under protest its 80-77 overtime loss against the Blue Eagles last Thursday.

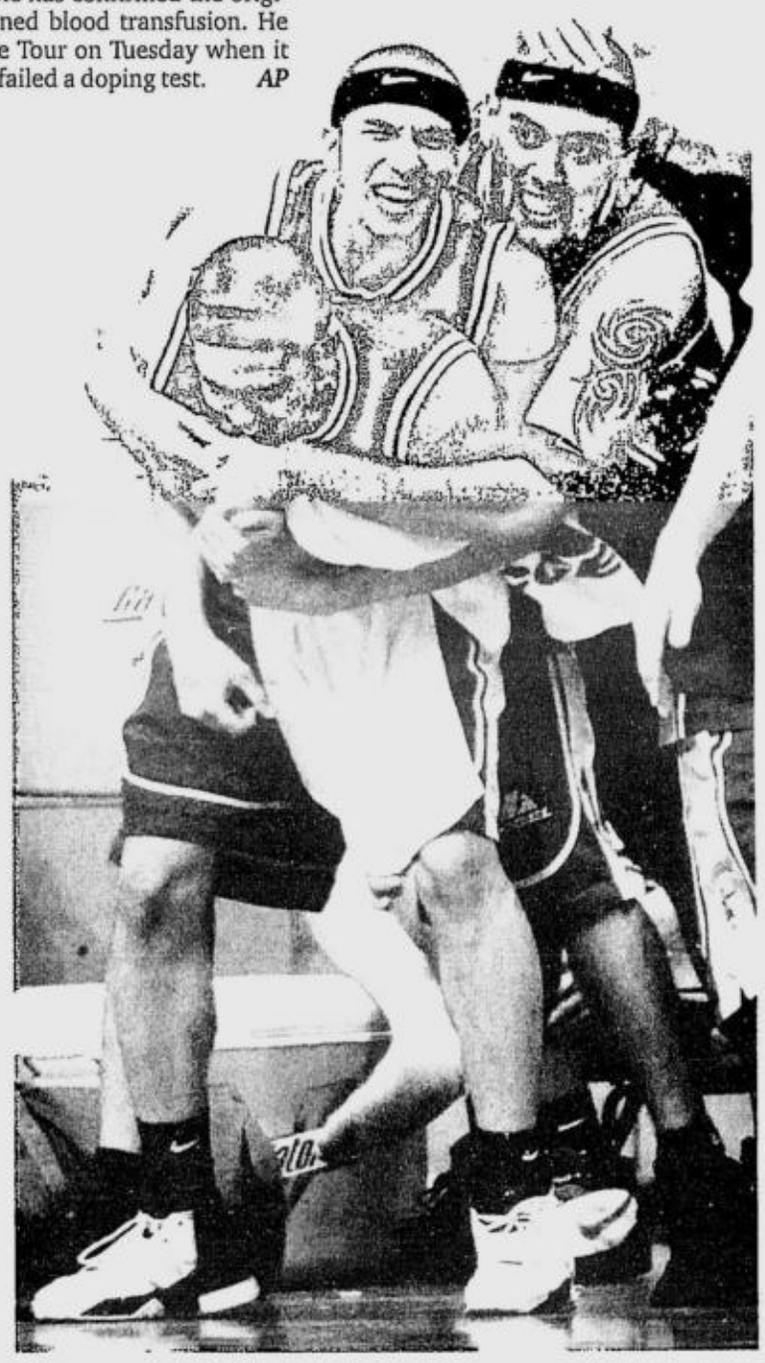
In its protest, La Salle said Ateneo fielded American rookie guard Kirk Long and Australian forward Zion Laterre at the same time.

"Ateneo committed a violation of Rule IX, the rule on no two foreigners playing at the same time," La Salle noted.

"It's a mistake that we made, and hopefully the technical committee will see that it was a mistake that was corrected," said Black. "[La Salle is] just trying to use a technicality to reverse the outcome of the game."

Black claimed Jai Reyes replaced Long as soon as he realized his mistake late in the second quarter.

"We just want the truth to come out," said Pumaren.



THE LA Salle Green Archers, who shaved their locks after two straight losses, celebrate their win over the UST Tigers in the UAAP men's basketball yesterday. See story on page 30. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

No. 755 eludes Bonds

SAN FRANCISO—BARRY BONDS went hitless a night after connecting for his 754th home run, leaving the San Francisco star one shy of tying Hank Aaron's record the Giants' 4-3 win over the Florida Marlins.

With his mom in the stands Saturday, Dontrelle Willis overmatched the slugger he admired growing up in the Bay Area.

Bonds was 0-for-3 with a walk, popping out twice and striking out against Willis, who has lost seven straight decisions, the longest skid of his big league career.

Bonds, on deck when Ray Durham got the winning single in the ninth, gets another chance in the finale against Florida on Sunday, when the Marlins start Sergio Mitre.

After a day off Monday, Bonds' pursuit moves on to Los Angeles where he'll be in front of hostile fans at Dodger Stadium.

Fans jumped to their feet each time Bonds made his way to the batter's box, then began their routine chants of "Barry! Barry!" *AP*

Tan gets vital BAP-SBP post

CHRISTIAN TAN HAS been named competition commissioner of the Basketball Association of the Philippines-Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas (BAP-SBP) during a board meeting recently.

TAN

As such, Tan, who used to be the executive cice president of the BAP, will handle the game officials, including referees and table officials of all international and national competitions being held under the auspices of the BAP-SBP.

"One of my goals is to push for the strengthening of the National Students Basketball Championships and call for reforms in officiating, making it more attuned to the FIBA rules," said Tan.

The amiable basketball official said that there is no longer a need to change the NSBC, saying it is a tradition that has lasted 63 years and stood the tests of time.

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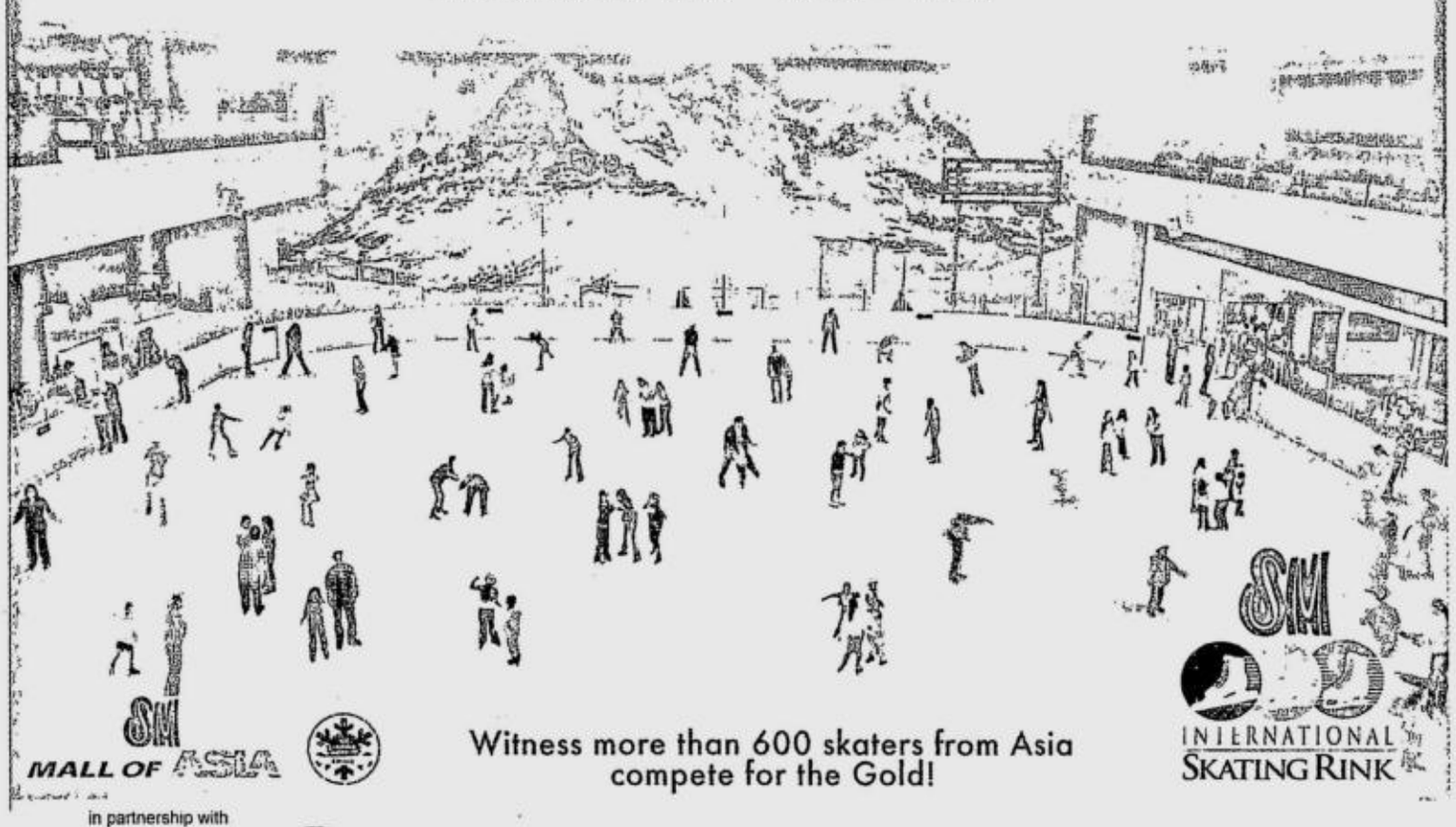
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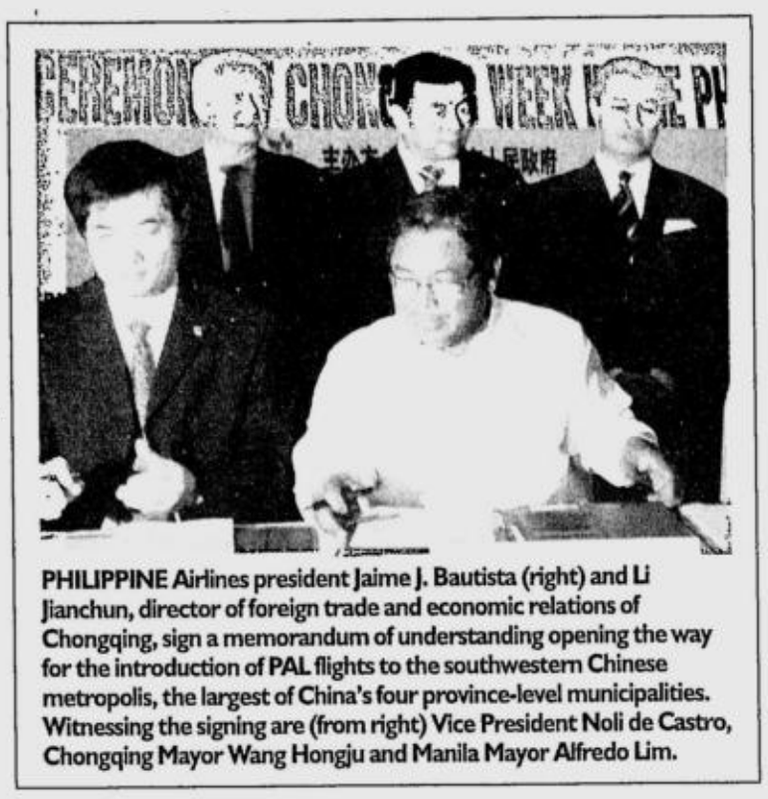
GMA orders gov't firms to give more dividends



PHILIPPINE Airlines president Jaime J. Bautista (right) and Li Jianchun, director of foreign trade and economic relations of Chongqing, sign a memorandum of understanding opening the way for the introduction of PAL flights to the southwestern Chinese metropolis, the largest of China's four province-level municipalities. Witnessing the signing are (from right) Vice President Noli de Castro, Chongqing Mayor Wang Hongju and Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim.

Move to help cover big tax collection shortfall

By Michelle V. Remo

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO HAS ORDERED GOVERNment-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) and government financial institutions (GFIs) to increase the dividends they remit to state coffers this year.

The directive, which came in the form of a memorandum to all heads of GOCCs and GFIs, was aimed at ensuring that the government will meet its deficit-reduction goal for 2007 despite the huge shortfall in tax collections in the first half.

"In support of our fiscal consolidation program, you are hereby instructed to maximize payments of dividends to the national government this year, including special dividends from the privatization of assets and/or subsidiaries," the President said in her memorandum.

State-owned firms are required by law to remit at least 50 percent of their net income to the national government. Only those with negative retained earnings are allowed to skip remitting dividends for a given year.

The President's memorandum directed state-owned firms to remit more than the minimum 50 percent of net income stated under the charters of GOCCs.

Finance Undersecretary Jeremias Paul Jr. earlier said the Department of Finance has intensi-

GMA ORDERS/ B4

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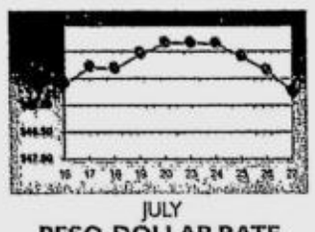

JULY

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STOCK MARKET

JULY

(See stock market report on Page B6)

SMC spins off beer operations into San Miguel Brewery

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE Commission (SEC) has now recognized San Miguel Brewery Inc. as a separate corporation from its parent, food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp., in preparation for the former's public listing.

San Miguel Brewery received an approval of its certificate of incorporation from the SEC last July 26.

As a company, San Miguel Brewery will be engaged in the manufacture of malt-based beer, documents with the SEC showed.

It is initially capitalized at P100 million consisting of 1 million shares at P100 each.

San Miguel Brewery will be controlled by San Miguel Corp., which has subscribed to P24.95 million worth of shares in the company or roughly 249,500 shares.

Board members and incorporators of San Miguel Brewery are San Miguel president Ramon Ang, chief finance officer Ferdinand Constantino, corporate secretary Francis Jardeleza, Virgilio Jacinto and Joseph Pineda.

San Miguel's beer division operates five breweries in the Philippines. These are strategically located in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

At San Miguel's recent stockholders' meeting, shareholders approved the transfer of the company's domestic beer assets, excluding land and brands, to a wholly owned subsidiary in exchange for shares of that domestic beer unit for the eventual listing and public offering of such shares.

San Miguel's partner Kirin Brewery of Japan is interested to invest in San Miguel Brewery, Constantino had told reporters during the annual meeting.

A strategic investor of San Miguel since 2002, Kirin Brewery Co. Ltd. has a 20-percent stake in the parent firm.

Details of the proposed initial public offer have yet to be finalized.

San Miguel's units which are listed on the stock exchange are hard liquor firm Ginebra San Miguel Inc., food manufacturer San Miguel Pure Foods Inc. and San Miguel Properties Inc.

San Miguel Packaging Specialists Inc. (SMPSI), which handles the group's packaging interests here and

SMC SPINS/ B4

Stocks seen to decline

THE STOCK MARKET MAY CONTINUE TO FALter this week after Wall Street's sharp fall Friday, analysts and fund managers said.

Analysts also see mixed prospects for GMA Network Inc.'s maiden listing today, despite last-minute efforts by the Marcos family to claim a third of the television network.

"Expect the performance of the Dow last Friday to dampen interest in GMA upon listing on Monday. However, if the market continues its steep decline in the first half of the week, expect it to rally toward the end as it reaches oversold levels in the short term," a local broker said.

"The market will be in a consolidation mood, probably with heightened volatility.

STOCKS/ B4

Barclays raises 2007 growth forecast for RP to 6.5%

By Michelle V. Remo

EXPRESSING BULLISHNESS ON THE Philippines, Barclays Capital raised its forecast on the country's economic growth this year to 6.5 percent from 5.7 percent.

The investment bank said in its publication titled "Asian Credit Outlook" that the revised growth forecast took into account the increase in personal consumption as supported by the rising inflows of remittances from overseas Filipino workers.

"So far recovery has been led by private consumption. Looking ahead, the recovery looks set to broaden with investments coming to the fore," Barclays Capital, investment arm of Barclays Bank Plc., said in its publication.

The investment bank's projection was within the government's gross domestic product (GDP) growth target of between 6.1 and 6.7 percent this year. Last year, the country's GDP grew by 5.4 percent.

Economic managers of the Arroyo administration said the expected acceleration of growth was attributed to the higher government spending due to the elections, the growing remittances and slowdown in inflation that boosts consumption, and the relatively low interest rates that encourage capital investment, among others.

In the first quarter, the economy grew by 6.9 percent, beating forecasts and posting its best performance in 17 years. Despite this, how-

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BSP expects July inflation at 1.8-2.5%

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE BANGKO SENtral ng Pilipinas (BSP) will not tighten monetary policy as a preemptive strike against the expected higher prices later this year as a result of the ongoing dry spell.

Apart from stressing its neutral stance, however, the BSP gave no assurance that commercial borrowing rates would not rise in response to the anticipated uptick in inflation due to lower farm output later this year, aggravated by the government's resurgent fiscal troubles.

In a text message, BSP Governor Amando M. Tetangco Jr. said that monetary policy "would normally not be used to respond to pressures of a short-term nature."

"This situation is better addressed from the supply side by the relevant government agencies having to do with food supply and energy," he said.

The prices of goods and services are expected to rise at a faster clip in the second half of the year as the delayed onset of the rainy season is expected to reduce farm output.

On Friday, Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap cut the country's projected rice output growth this year to 3.5 to 4 percent from 5 percent due to lower-than-expected rainfall.

At worst, the output growth could be as low as 1.5 to 2 percent for 2007, he said.

Pending the inflation uptick, however, the BSP said that prices of goods and services likely grew at a slower pace in July.

Tetangco said the July inflation rate would likely come in between 1.8 and 2.5 percent "due to good crop harvest, lower LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) prices and the strong peso."

"Our past tightening in September and October 2006 was also contributory," he said.

The June inflation rate came in at 2.3 percent, bringing the average for the first half of the year to 2.63 percent. If the official figure comes in at the lower end of the central bank's forecast range, the seven-month average would fall to 2.51 percent. At the high end, the average would still decline marginally to 2.61 percent.

The government is scheduled to release the official inflation figure in the first week of August.

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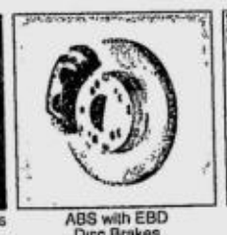
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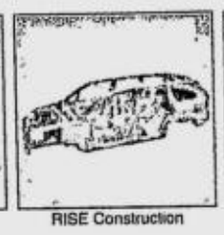
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PNOC-EC

Another gov't firm going public

By Abigail L. Ho

WHILE GOING THROUGH THE PROcess of further privatizing the PNOC Energy Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC), state firm Philippine National Oil Co. expects its other subsidiary, PNOC Exploration Corp. (PNOC-EC), to also be privatized by end-2007 or the first quarter of 2008.

PNOC president Pedro Aquino Jr. said PNOC-EC was still in the process of searching for a financial adviser for the privatization process.

"We're trying to make a sale before the end of the year or the first quarter of 2008. I guess there's an appetite for this," he said.

Early last month, PNOC-EC privatization committee chair Edgardo del Fonso said in a bid invitation for the financial adviser contract that the prospective financial adviser/lead arranger/underwriter should have ample experience in equity offerings.

It should also have a track record of working with the Philippine government, either as an adviser for privatization or as an arranger bank for financing.

Another criterion, he said, was the firm's experience in lead-managing public equity offerings and arranging equity sales in Asia and in other parts of the world.

The firm should also be willing to deploy to the country a dedicated team with solid experience in oil and gas or coal projects.

"(The) prospective financial adviser/lead arranger/underwriter/global coordinator must meet all of the criteria," Del Fonso said.

Aquino said PNOC-EC had yet to select its financial adviser, but this should be done soon.

In an earlier interview, he said PNOC-EC planned to increase its public shareholdings to as much as 40 percent within the year through a secondary offering.

Only 1.7 percent of PNOC-EC is held by the public, he said.

Outgoing Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla had earlier said the planned secondary offering could be separate from the earlier formulated privatization strategy of PNOC-EC, which involved selling 49 percent of the state firm's 10-percent stake in the Malampaya Deep Water Gas-to-Power project.

"We'll continue to consider ways to raise funds to lessen dependence on government guarantees and loans," he said.

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Unstable equilibrium

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Cielito F. Habito

"THE ECONOMY IS DOING WELL; WE NEED to unite and sustain the gains, instead of rocking the boat and derailing the progress we are making."

We hear this statement a lot these days, mostly from Malacañang and business circles, so often in fact that some people now even question the patriotism of those who call attention to the wrongs being done in our midst.

Flaws

I have difficulty subscribing to this proposition, on two grounds: One, its premise is open to question, and two, looking the other way or closing our eyes to wrongdoing never makes for lasting stability—especially when there is just too much of such wrongdoing to be ignored. Ignoring them for the sake of "unity" and "stability" would only be promoting an unstable equilibrium (an oxymoron?).

This is what worries me about accepting the proposition outright. I would hate to see our economy fall apart again and bring us even farther from the dream of First World status that all of us would like to see fulfilled. But we are risking precisely this if we fail to address the flaws in our current economic (not to mention political) directions, as embodied in policies, high-level decisions, presidential appointments and even specific government projects. We cannot afford not to point them out, publicly debate on their implications and collectively determine whatever superior options there may be available to us. There is a world of difference between constructive criticism and economic sabotage. Unfortunately, too many among us can't seem to tell them apart.

Two out of three

Is the premise valid? There are positive trends in the data indeed, but can we truly and honestly say the economy is doing well? Who make up the economy anyway?

I keep saying that there are only three economic indicators that matter to the average Filipino: *Presyo* (prices), *hanapbuhay* (jobs and livelihood) and *kita* (incomes). Through my years in government, I saw how little patience most of my audiences had with statistics on fiscal and external balances, interest rates, price-equity ratios, stock market indices and bond spreads, and other data that only financial analysts and maybe CEOs would stay awake for.

On this basis, I had been characterizing our overall economic performance until recently by saying "Two out of three ain't bad"—referring to the way inflation has been low and GDP (that is, output and income) growth has been respectable, while the jobs situation had been worsening.

Weaknesses within

Lately, all three are showing positive movement, which is welcome news indeed. But as I have recently pointed out, the devil is in the details. And looking more closely at the statistics on jobs and on the sources of our economic growth brings to light problems that tell us, in no uncertain terms, that not all is well in our economy.

In fact, the situation suggests to me that it would be outright dangerous to proceed in the same directions we have been taking, given these weaknesses lurking within.

I will not repeat what I have written recently (NFL 7/9/07) on the declining quality of jobs even with their increasing quantity. What is even more threatening is the alarming decline in domestic investments over the past two years. Foreign investments were not a problem; last year, they grew briskly by over 50 percent, based on BSP data on actual inflows. Do foreigners see our longer-term potentials better than local investors do? Or is it because the foreigners fail to see something that the locals know more intimately?

Falling confidence

The latest news from BSP is worrisome: Foreign investment inflows fell in the first four months of this year, in contrast to last year's brisk growth. As it is, we are already investing far less than our neighbors do, i.e., 15 percent of our GDP against our neighbors' 25 percent or higher—and the gap is widening. We averaged a mere 0.6-percent average annual investment growth in 2002-2006, while our neighbors averaged from 3 to 20 percent annually. Malacañang's selective statistics notwithstanding, the official statistics speak for themselves.

The recent Sona was an opportunity to usher in real change, and to redeem the troubled presidency in its remaining years. Disappointingly, recent actions and developments—and yes, the Sona speech itself—point to more of the same. But all the above tell us we just cannot afford more of the same. We need to address the ongoing crisis in investment confidence from the core. We badly need confidence boosters from the government—not more killings, more erring officials going unpunished, more questionable government appointments, more anomalous government contracts, more policies and decisions sacrificing the welfare of the greater majority in favor of a few powerful vested interests.

No one disputes the dire need for unity and solidarity in this country. But to ask Filipinos to unite in perpetuating wrongs is something else.

Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu

GMA orders gov't firms . . .

From page B1

fied its monitoring of the financial performance of state-owned firms to ensure their compliance with the dividend remittance requirement.

The move to require more remittances from GOCCs and GFIs followed the failure of the bureaus of Internal Revenue and of Customs, the two biggest revenue earners among government agencies, to meet their revenue collection targets for the first half.

The BIR was tasked to collect P373.3 billion in taxes in January to June but turned in only P334.7 billion. On the other hand, Customs was required to generate P105.3 billion in taxes and duties in the first half, but its revenues reached only P92.2 billion.

The tax collection shortfall has been blamed for the government's failure to keep its budget deficit in the first half within the official ceiling of P31.3 billion as the actual gap hit P41 billion.

For the entire year, the government has set a target of limiting the deficit to only P63 billion, better than last year's P64.8 billion. But the government's ability to meet this target depends on whether or not the BIR and Customs could arrest their shortfalls and if the government could tap nontax sources of revenues.

The government wants to further reduce its deficit this year to achieve the goal of finally balancing its budget by 2008.

Finance officials said state-owned firms should play a significant role in boosting government revenues.

The Department of Finance earlier reported that combined dividends remitted by state-owned firms in the first half amounted to P5.53 billion. This was 38-percent higher than the P4 billion programmed for the period but still lower than the P5.8 billion collected in the first six months of 2006.

SMC spins off beer . . .

From page B1

abroad, is also likely to be taken public, sources said earlier.

San Miguel earlier signed an agreement with longtime joint venture partner Nihon Yamamura Glass for the latter's 35-percent equity infusion in SMPSI.

"We believe that stand-alone domestic brewing and packaging operations will enhance our companies' ability to compete more effectively in their industries. An IPO (initial public offer) would raise for each business much needed equity and allow it to grow faster and partner more effectively with other world-class players like Kirin and Nihon Yamamura Glass," San Miguel president Ramon Ang said earlier.

Stocks seen to decline

From page B1

GMA could still do well but maybe not as good as expected," said Francisco Liboro, president of PCCI Securities.

Local stocks took a beating on Friday after Wall Street's sharp selloff. The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index plummeted 140.92 points, or 3.9 percent, to 3,518.76—its steepest single-day fall since Aug. 28, 1997.

AB Capital Securities noted in a daily report that worries on the US housing and credit markets prompted a more than 300-point drop on Wall Street overnight. This exacerbated the already cautious Philippine market, which was already fretting about the government's poor fiscal performance.

"The market would take its cue from volatile global equity markets. Concern about the subprime mortgage problems in the US prompted investors to reduce exposure in growth or risky assets. We see this market correction as a healthy pullback and an opportunity to buy shares with good fundamentals at cheaper levels," said Paul Joseph Garcia, president of the Fund Managers Association of the Philippines. *Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson*

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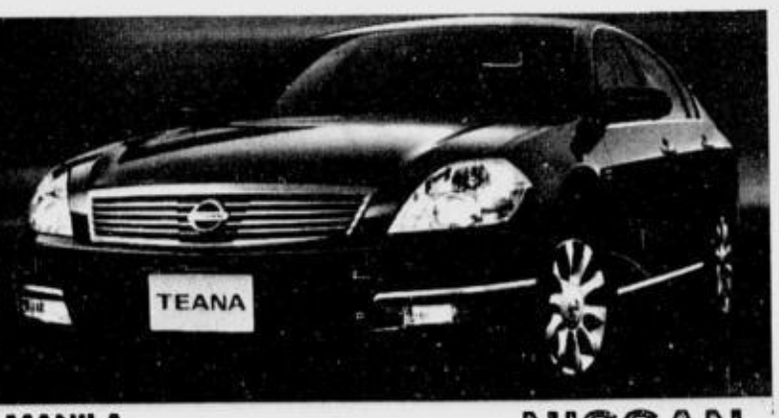

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RP-Taiwan trade slows down

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TRADE BETWEEN THE PHILIPPINES AND Taiwan slowed down 7.25 percent to $2.76 billion in the first five months, showing the continued drop in the demand for Philippine products.

Data from Taiwan's Government Information Office or GIO showed that Taiwan imported from the Philippines about $911.2 million worth of goods from January to May this year.

On the other hand, Taiwan sent to the Philippines $1.85 billion worth of goods. Taiwan has thus maintained the upper hand with a trade surplus of about $942.1 million, increasing by 51.7 percent from the same period last year.

The Philippines is now Taiwan's sixth-largest trading partner after Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Thailand and Indonesia.

The country used to be at fifth place until it was overtaken by Vietnam.

China is Taiwan's largest trading partner with an 18.5-percent share or $33 billion of the latter's aggregate trade in terms of value.

Also, the Philippines was the 11th leading destination of Taiwanese exports with 1.98 percent of total outbound cargoes valued at some $93.8 billion.

The country ranked 19th among the largest sources of Taiwan's imports—an improvement by a notch from 20th in the first quarter—accounting for about 1.07 percent of total inbound shipments worth some $84.7 billion.

Despite the lower figures, the semiconductor industry, which sends out the majority of the Philippines exports, expressed confidence that the numbers would be better later this year.

The semiconductor industry was confident that it would be able to increase exports by 10 percent or $3 billion.

Demand for semiconductors has slowed due to the economic slowdown in the world's major markets such as the United States.

BSP OKs Sterling Bank's purchase of BPI branches

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS (BSP) recently approved the application of Sterling Bank of Asia to purchase 14 bank branches of BPI Family Savings Bank.

In a statement, Sterling Bank said the acquisition of the new branches would boost its network to 15, including its main branch along Ayala Avenue in Makati City, which was opened last March 30, 2007.

Sterling Bank president Lamberto R. Villena said the thrift bank recently applied with the Securities and Exchange Commission for an increase in its capitalization from P500 million to P1 billion to fund its expansion.

The central bank requires thrift banks to have a minimum capitalization of P325 million.

Villena added that the bank plans to open another 15 branches by the end of the year.

"We are a new player in the crowded domestic banking industry, but we believe that we can find a niche as we offer professional banking with the highest regard for the customer," he said in the statement.

Sterling Bank is targeting professionals, entrepreneurs, overseas Filipinos and corporate clients.

Aside from deposit products, the bank also provides consumer lending such as auto, personal, salary and mortgage loans.

Last December, BSP approved the purchase of Far East Savings Bank Inc. from BPI by a group of investors composed of JTKC Equities Inc., Star Equities and Surewell Equities Inc.

Far East Savings was subsequently renamed Sterling Bank of Asia last February.

JTKC and Star Equities have investments in various firms involved in a range of industries from logistics to finance, real estate, manufacturing and hotel and resort properties.

Among them are Discovery Suites in Ortigas Center, the Mansions Group of serviced apartments, Kent Vinyl Tiles and iRemit Global Remittance. Surewell Equities is also an investor in iRemit and engaged in the development of low- to medium-cost housing in Calabarzon and Bulacan.

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GMA 7 lists shares today amid market anxieties

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE (PSE) said it was "all systems go" for the maiden public listing of television giant GMA Network Inc. today.

The PSF said in a statement issued Saturday that "unless the Securities and Exchange Commission suspends GMA's registration and licensing order as well as its permit to offer securities for sale or a temporary restraining order is issued by a competent court and properly served on the Exchange, the listing of the shares and Philippine Deposit Receipts of GMA shall proceed as scheduled on July 30."

The eldest daughter of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos asked the Securities and Exchange Commission late Friday to suspend the listing of GMA Network shares on the stock exchange because of what she claimed was a doubtful ownership of shares held by the Duavit family, one of the broadcast company's three major shareholders.

GMA Network raised P7.7 billion from its public share offering that ended early last week. The shares were priced at P8.50 each.

SEC Commissioner Juanita Cueto, who received the letter of Imee Marcos last Friday, said the listing of GMA Network shares on the Philippine Stock Exchange would push through as scheduled since it was previously approved by the Commission en banc. The SEC, however, would evaluate the claims made by Marcos against GMA Network.

In her letter to the SEC, Imee Marcos said her family owned the shares held by Gilbert Duavit and his family and their holding firm, Group Management Development Inc.

She said Duavit, who bought the shares from Republic Broadcasting System, the company that became GMA Network, was holding the shares in trust for the Marcos family.

Lawyers of Imee Marcos said the former congresswoman had personal knowledge that "there is a cloud of doubt" on the real and beneficial ownership of the shares which were bought from Republic Broadcasting by Duavit.

GMA Network is currently owned and controlled by three major shareholder blocs—the Duavit group with 35 percent, the Jimenez group with 35 percent and the Gozon family with 30 percent.

Marcos' lawyers said GMA Network had stated in its prospectus that "the Duavits were one of the three majority stockholders who would receive 28.35 percent of the enlarged share capital, without disclosing further that the shares held in the name of the Duavits were merely held in trust for our client and her family."

GMA Network's legal counsel, Gener Asuncion, countered that the Duavits were the real owners of their GMA Network shares and had concrete proof of their ownership.

"Sometime in 1986, a former owner of Republic Broadcasting, Loreto F. Stewart, sought to recover shares of the Duavits and even asked for injunction to prevent the registration of the shares in their favor but this was rejected by the court," Asuncion said in a statement.

"Finally, Mrs. Stewart gave a notice of dismissal of her complaint and on Nov. 28, 1986, the court dismissed the complaint," he added.

Asuncion said Imee Marcos' letter to the SEC would have no adverse effect on the strong interest of the investing public in GMA Network shares.

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CLUB FILIPINO	-	80,000
CLUB PUNTA FUEGO	370,000	330,000
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ORCHARD A	PLS CALL	180,000
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GG&A Club Shares
SEC License Broker No.: BD-00131
Quotation as of July 30, 2007

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "A"	1,200,000	1,050,000
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"	1,250,000	1,050,000
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	600,000	550,000
CAMP JOHN HAY	300,000	270,000
CANLUBANG	470,000	430,000
CANYON WOODS	100,000	85,000
CAPITOL HILLS	40,000	-
CEBU COUNTRY CLUB	-	2,000,000
CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	130,000	100,000
CLUB FILIPINO	90,000	80,000
EAGLERIDGE "B"	250,000	-
EAGLERIDGE "C"	350,000	320,000
FOREST HILLS "A"	90,000	-
LUISITA GOLF "A"	350,000	270,000
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	200,000	190,000
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	250,000	190,000
MANILA GOLF (CORP)	-	20,000,000
MANILA GOLF (IND)	-	18,000,000
MANILA POLO	Please Call	3,750,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	290,000	275,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "B"	680,000	-
MANILA YACHT CLUB	200,000	-
MIMOSA (IND)	230,000	-
MT. MALARAYAT GOLD "A"	160,000	-
ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "A"	180,000	160,000
ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "B"	280,000	250,000
ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "C"	350,000	-
QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	170,000	140,000
ROCKWELL CLUB	320,000	230,000
SPA & LODGE	500,000	-
STA. ELENA "A"	2,000,000	1,600,000
STA. ELENA "B"	-	2,050,000
TAGAYTAY COUNTRY CLUB	320,000	290,000
TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	730,000	650,000
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	650,000	-
THE PALMS COUNTRY CLUB "A"	380,000	300,000
VALLE VERDE (IND)	100,000	80,000
VALLEY GOLF	250,000	200,000
WACK-WACK GOLF CLUB	10,000,000	9,500,000

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Alliance Global net profit soars to ₱2.1B

ALLIANCE GLOBAL Group Inc. (AGGI), the holding company of property magnate Andrew Tan, said its consolidated net income soared to P2.1 billion in the first half from P224.8 million a year ago.

Excluding minority interests, it said net income jumped to a record P1.23 billion in the first half, up 441 percent from P227.4 million in the same period last year.

AGGI said consolidated revenues in the same period surged to P12.4 billion from P3.5 billion a year ago.

The company has a cash horde of P32.9 billion as of June 30 this year. It plans to invest this in its three main businesses–food and beverage, real estate and the development of quick service restaurants—to ensure their sustained growth.

"Alliance Global is on a strong growth trajectory as its three main businesses are all performing well, and we expect this scenario to continue during the second half of 2007," said AGGI president and chief operating officer Kingson Sian.

AGGI said it has a net cash position of P24.5 billion after deducting its consolidated debt of P8.4 billion.

"Our company is one of the best capitalized conglomerates in the country," Sian said. "This puts us in a unique position to seize the vast opportunities in the marketplace."

AGGI recently completed a successful follow-on share offer as part of its transformation into a holding company focused on three key business segments.

Its food and beverage division is led by wholly owned distilled spirits manufacturing company Emperador Distillers Inc. (EDI), which produces the top-selling brandy Emperador and Generoso. *Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson*

G & W clubshares
SEC License Broker No.: A-17597
FREE PLAYING RIGHTS AVAILABLE
As of July 30, 2007
SHARES AVAILABLE

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club A/B*	Pls. Call/1,250,000*	1,080,000
Alta Vista A/B*/Corp.**	-	300,000/Pls. Call*
Baguio Country Club	600,000	550,000
Camp John Hay	330,000	280,000
Canlubang Golf	Pls. Call	440,000
Canyon Woods	90,000	-
Cebu Country Club	Pls. Call	2,000,000
Club Filipino	90,000	Pls. Call
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	160,000/Pls. Call*	200,000*
Eastridge A/B*	Pls. Call*	130,000*
Fairways & Bluewater	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	90,000	150,000*
Luisita Golf B	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Manila Golf Corporate	24,000,000	20,000,000
Manila Golf Individual	Pls. Call	18,000,000
Manila Polo	Pls. Call	3,900,000
Manila Southwoods A/B*	300,000/Pls. Call*	250,000
Makati Sports Club A/B*	200,000/230,000*	180,000
Manila Yacht Club Ind.	260,000	150,000
Metropolitan Club A/B*	160,000	-
Mimosa C1/C2*/C3**	220,000/580,000**	180,000/260,000*
Mt. Malarayat A	180,000	-
Orchard A/B*/C**	170,000/250,000*/350,000**	-
Punta Fuego	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Quezon City Sports Club	170,000	130,000
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	170,000*/250,000**	130,000*/150,000**
Rockwell Leisure Club	Pls. Call	220,000
Royale Tagaytay CC	65,000	-
Sherwood A/B*/C**	70,000/170,000*	100,000*
Splendido Taal	200,000	Pls. Call
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	Pls. Call	1,600,000
The Palms Country Club	380,000	Pls. Call
Tagaytay Country Club	320,000	-
Tagaytay Highlands	700,000	650,000
Tagaytay Midlands	670,000	650,000
The Country Club	2,200,000	-
Tower Club A/B*	150,000/180,000*	-
Valley Golf	Pls. Call	230,000
Valle Verde Ind.	100,000	-
Wack Wack Golf	9,000,000	8,700,000

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of July 27, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	SEC NAME	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5.4	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	11	11	10	10	141,100
73	30.5	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	65	66.5	64	66	1,360,300
73.5	51	Bank of the Philippine Islands	68.5	68.5	66	66.5	2,003,300
935	630	China Banking Corp.	860	860	835	845	16,180
40	19	Chinatrust (Phils.) Comm'l Banking Corp.	31	31	31	31	2,000
20.25	18.18	Citystate Savings Bank	20.25	20.25	20.25	20.25	300
0.63	0.37	Export and Industry Bank Inc	0.53	0.53	0.51	0.52	2,510,000
75.5	35.5	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	65	66.5	63.5	63.5	3,177,100
68	39	Philippine Savings Bank	63	64	63	64	4,000
72	40	Philippine Bank of Communications	52	52	52	52	3,000
39.57	14.13	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	32	33	31.5	32	2,307,400
90	46.5	Security Bank Corp.	82.5	83	81.5	82	54,600
66	41.54	Union Bank of the Philippines	59	62	59	62	37,800
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
1.5	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.18	1.2	1.18	1.18	668,000
16.25	1.78	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	13	13	12.5	12.5	1,364,400
1.6	0.4	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	272,000
42	28	First Metro Investment Corp.	40	41.5	40	41.5	3,000
5	4.05	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.1	6,044,000
3.1	0.99	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	2.44	2.44	2.44	2.44	30,000
1,005.00	212	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc	790	810	775	810	10,080
1.94	1.28	iVantage Corp	1.78	1.78	1.74	1.74	150,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	5.3	Aboitiz Power Corp.	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.3	29,543,000
0.57	0.23	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.44	0.44	0.4	0.4	380,000
70	41.5	First Gen Corp.	67	67	64	64	2,295,700
92	41	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	86	86	82	83	958,400
15	7.9	Manila Water Co. Inc.	14	14.5	13.75	14.25	10,645,300
116	15	Manila Electric Co. "A"	101	101	95	95	451,790
118	24	Manila Electric Co. "B"	100	100	94.5	95	3,756,620
7	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.5	121,602,000
6.5	3.75	Petron Corp.	6.2	6.2	5.9	6	10,431,000
14.75	10.75	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	11.5	11.75	10.75	11.25	1,760,700
1.9	0.92	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp	1.4	1.42	1.36	1.4	1,896,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	2.85	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.6	5.6	25,000
2.95	1.88	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	2.18	2.18	2.18	2.18	375,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	24.5	24.5	24	24	20,000
61	31.5	Jollibee Foods Corp.	51	51	46.5	46.5	1,496,300
1.96	0.77	RFM Corp.	1.82	1.86	1.82	1.84	259,000
4.05	2.2	Roxas Holdings	2.55	2.55	2.5	2.5	366,000
80	61	San Miguel Corp. "A"	72.5	73	71.5	73	232,800
88	69.5	San Miguel Corp. "B"	75	75	74	74.5	259,600
0.66	0.2	Swift Foods Inc.	0.59	0.59	0.57	0.57	440,000
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp.	17	17	16.5	16.75	468,900
0.55	0.2	Vitarich Corp.	0.41	0.41	0.38	0.38	1,370,000
		CONSTRUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	1.55	EEI Corp	4.95	4.95	4.6	4.9	3,424,000
21.5	6	Federal Chemicals Inc.	18	20	18	20	200
9.2	4.3	Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.5	7.5	7.3	7.5	711,000
2	0.27	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc	1.56	1.56	1.56	1.56	3,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	1.42	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	5.2	5.3	5.1	5.3	1,172,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.0675	Picop Resources Inc	0.51	0.53	0.5	0.51	50,780,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	1.8	A. Soriano Corp.	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.55	549,000
0.17	0.024	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.12	0.125	49,460,000
1.28	0.2	APC Group Inc.	0.98	1.02	0.96	1	19,350,000
3.6	1.4	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	2.46	2.5	2.46	2.48	408,000
3.3	1.48	ATN Holdings Inc. "B"	2.42	2.6	2.42	2.6	521,000
0.018	0.007	Abacus Cons. Res. & Hold'gs Inc. "A"	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	73,800,000
0.019	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. & Hold'gs Inc. "B"	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	40,100,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	7.5	7.5	7.3	7.4	4,618,000
0.021	0.0075	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	139,000,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	5.8	5.9	5.8	5.8	6,058,000
1.38	0.48	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.85	0.92	0.85	0.85	1,280,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.4	2.42	2.36	2.36	3,268,000
8	0.8	Aries Prime Resources Inc.	4.2	4.2	4	4	75,000
590	335.42	Ayala Corp.	540	540	520	525	473,830
14.5	6.96	Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc.	13.25	13.25	13.25	13.25	12,300
6.9	0.8	Balabac Resources & Holdings Co. Inc.	5.5	5.5	5.2	5.2	1,260,000
5.8	1.06	Benpres Holdings Corp.	5	5.2	4.9	4.9	22,245,000
10.25	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	9.5	9.5	9.2	9.3	1,825,000
2.5	0.7	F and J Prince Holdings Corp. "A"	1.84	1.86	1.84	1.86	89,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.8	1,520,000
3.55	1.16	House of Investments Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2,000
14.5	5.6	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	10.5	10.75	10.5	10.5	702,100
5.9	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	3.3	3.3	3	3	228,000
2.65	1.42	Keppel Philippines Holdings Inc. "B"	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	110,000
0.8	0.185	Medco Holdings Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	600,000
0.95	0.13	Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	210,000
11.5	0.26	Multitech Investments Corp.	8.5	9.2	8.4	8.4	16,019,000
8.2	1.94	PAL Holdings Inc.	7.5	7.5	7.2	7.3	939,000
0.75	0.17	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.57	0.57	0.55	0.55	5,450,000
2.04	1.2	Republic Glass Holdings Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.02	2.02	68,000
452.5	202.36	SM Investments Corp.	417.5	417.5	410	412.5	488,890
2.2	0.71	Seafront Resources Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	356,000
0.73	0.115	Sinophil Corp.	0.48	0.48	0.46	0.46	16,320,000
1.06	0.51	Solid Group Inc.	0.89	0.89	0.88	0.89	690,000
1.6	0.85	South China Resources Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	50,000
4.4	1	TKC Steel Corp.	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	1,000
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.5	0.55	0.5	0.52	3,620,000
1.1	0.155	Zeus Holdings Inc	0.77	0.77	0.75	0.75	670,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	0.78	A Brown Co. Inc.	1.76	1.76	1.5	1.5	10,824,000
1.06	0.32	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.74	620,000
19.25	10.83	Ayala Land Inc.	16.5	16.75	16.25	16.5	31,654,500
1.88	0.99	Belle Corp.	1.48	1.48	1.44	1.46	5,142,000
4.7	2.1	Cebu Holdings Inc.	4.3	4.3	4.25	4.25	205,000
2	1.2	Cebu Property Venture & Dev't Corp."A"	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	30,000
2.1	1.2	Cebu Property Venture & Dev't Corp."B"	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	130,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.59	0.59	0.54	0.55	32,210,000
3.25	0.78	Edsa Properties Holdings Inc.	3.05	3.05	3	3	203,000
0.99	0.45	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.81	0.82	0.8	0.81	30,620,000
0.47	0.038	Ever Gotesco Resources & Hold'gs Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.3	0.3	86,870,000
1.48	0.38	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.26	1.36	1.24	1.26	48,111,000
2.44	1.06	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.98	1.98	1.9	1.96	52,612,000
0.49	0.07	Gotesco Land Inc. "A"	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.35	1,300,000
0.5	0.07	Gotesco Land Inc. "B"	0.36	0.39	0.34	0.39	260,000
3.3	2.16	Highlands Prime Inc.	3	3	2.9	2.9	193,000
2.9	0.8	Keppel Philippines Properties Inc.	2.44	2.44	2.44	2.44	70,000
1.12	0.22	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.81	0.81	0.8	0.8	230,000
4.4	1.34	Megaworld Corp.	3.85	3.85	3.75	3.85	53,024,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.1	4.1	4.05	4.1	410,000
0.7	0.11	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.45	0.52	0.45	0.45	700,000
0.87	0.27	Philippine Realty & Holdings Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.63	0.64	2,880,000
9.2	1.1	Polar Property Holdings Corp	5.7	5.7	5.4	5.4	40,000
23	11	Robinson Land Corp.	18.75	18.75	17.25	17.25	5,496,800
5.9	1.28	SM Development Corp.	5.4	5.4	5.2	5.4	2,880,000
13.5	6.08	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	12.25	12.5	12	12	8,787,800
1.34	0.55	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.92	0.93	0.88	0.88	5,970,000
0.49	0.0675	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.33	0.33	19,510,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc	6.6	6.6	6.4	6.5	145,003,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	15.75	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	36	36	35.5	36	34,500
1.14	0.98	Manila Bulletin Publishing Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.08	1.08	274,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.16	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.46	1.46	1.4	1.42	4,608,000
1,445.00	970	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,350.00	1,350.00	1,300.00	1,305.00	44,230
2,820.00	1,890.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co	2,650.00	2,650.00	2,620.00	2,625.00	107,240
7.9	3.55	Pilipino Telephone Corp	7.1	7.1	7	7.1	3,075,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.27	7,380,000
12	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	5,000
11.5	2	IPVG Corp.	10.5	10.75	10	10.25	4,808,400
0.065	0.028	ISM Communications Corp.	0.044	0.044	0.042	0.043	77,300,000
29.5	6	Imperial Resources Inc. "A"	20	20	20	20	2,000
2.9	1.8	Ionics Inc.	2.12	2.12	2.06	2.06	515,000
0.32	0.04	Island Information & Technology Inc.	0.21	0.215	0.205	0.21	32,510,000
2.08	1.12	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.48	1.48	1.48	1.48	30,000
0.0725	0.027	PhilWeb.Com Inc.	0.055	0.055	0.05	0.055	683,100,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	2.4	2.44	2.36	2.4	746,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
1.92	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.68	1.68	5,000
6.8	2.6	Asian Terminals Inc.	5.1	5.1	4.9	4.9	282,000
34.5	14	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	31.5	32	31	31.5	942,200
2.16	0.87	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc	2.12	2.12	2.12	2.12	94,000
2.04	0.8	Lorenzo Shipping Corp	1.42	1.42	1.3	1.3	151,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.28	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	3.7	3.7	3.65	3.65	1,696,000
0.98	0.2	Premiere Entertainment Prod. Inc.	0.74	0.75	0.72	0.72	1,070,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc	0.9	0.92	0.85	0.85	2,240,000
		EDUCATION					
966.67	650	Far Eastern University Inc.	850	850	850	850	500
3.7	2.65	iPeople Inc	3.2	3.25	3.2	3.25	53,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
6	1.9	Macroasia Corp	5.3	5.3	5	5.2	3,101,000
17.25	13	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	13.25	13.25	13	13.25	147,900
30	9.9	Paxys Inc	20	20.25	19.5	20	289,700
		MINING					
0.018	0.0075	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.013	122,900,000
7.6	3.65	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	5.4	5.6	5.2	5.3	186,000
7.7	3.65	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	5.5	5.5	5.1	5.1	36,000
21.25	7.6	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	16	16.25	15.75	15.75	7,081,700
14.25	8.7	Benguet Corp. "A"	11.25	11.25	11	11	79,100
5	1.76	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	4	4	4	4	50,000
3.1	0.1203	Geograce Resources Philippines Inc.	2.65	2.8	2.65	2.7	47,189,000
0.35	0.215	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	8,800,000
0.42	0.225	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.32	11,660,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.029	0.029	0.028	0.029	353,100,000
0.041	0.019	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.032	0.032	0.031	0.031	136,300,000
30	0.88	NIHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	21.25	22	20	21	602,800
0.021	0.0079	Omico Corp.	0.018	0.018	0.016	0.016	1,426,600,000
6.4	3.15	Philex Mining Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.5	5.6	9,969,000
43	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	35.5	35.5	35	35	624,000
1.36	0.39	United Paragon Mining Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.02	1.02	1,716,000
1.8	0.52	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp	1.36	1.38	1.34	1.36	3,869,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.48	0.48	0.46	0.46	7,220,000
0.025	0.0095	Oriental Pet. & Minerals Corp. "A"	0.024	0.024	0.022	0.023	650,800,000
0.027	0.01	Oriental Pet. & Minerals Corp. "B"	0.025	0.026	0.024	0.025	264,000,000
14.25	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10.25	10.25	10	10	224,800
0.028	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.024	0.024	0.023	0.024	238,600,000

AVERAGES			VOLUME	VALUE
Financial	946.68 DOWN	25.57	22,969,580	674,053,165.00
Industrial	4,799.22 DOWN	239.65	245,123,310	1,999,689,945.00
Holding Firms	2,068.24 DOWN	115.88	412,435,120	883,891,315.00
Property	1,696.15 DOWN	93.83	545,986,100	2,172,840,195.00
Service	1,589.31 DOWN	31.65	824,611,670	535,787,710.00
Mining & Oil	6,580.59 DOWN	287.89	3,291,607,400	418,169,455.00
All Shares Index	2,283.23 DOWN	89.19		
PSEI	3,518.76 DOWN	140.92		
		GRAND TOTALS	5,342,733,180	6,684,431,785.00

COMPILED BY SCHATZI QUODALA, INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK, PSE

RP-based Korean firms seek free trade deal

FTA expected to boost investment flow

KOREAN INVESTORS ARE pushing for more liberal trade between South Korea and the Philippines through a regional free trade agreement with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations as a meeting among economic ministers in the region approaches.

In an interview, Jang Jae Jung, president of the Korean Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines, said there was no other option for Korea and the Asean countries but to enter into trade pacts.

"We must not be left behind in the general move toward FTAs and further trade liberalization among partners," Jang said.

Negotiations for an Asean-Korea FTA are underway, covering building blocks that include a framework agreement on a comprehensive economic cooperation; trade in goods (TIG) deal, and an agreement on a mechanism for dispute settlement.

Trade officials are set to resume talks in three weeks as the Asean economic ministers and their counterparts from East Asian partner countries meet in August.

According to Jang, such a pact would boost investment inflows from South Korea to the Philippines, which reached P54 billion in 2006, the largest from any country.

He said there were about 2,000 companies registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission that were owned by Koreans.

Also, there are 322 Korean companies whose projects are registered listed with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority.

"Korean companies that operate here employ about 150,000 Filipino workers and staff members, whose salaries add up to about P24 billion yearly," Jang said.

According to the Bureau of International Trade Relations, an AKFTA would boost Philippine export earnings by $500 million to $1 billion yearly.

BITR data show that based on current prices, bilateral trade between the two countries grew by only 0.75 percent from 2002, reaching $4.6 billion in 2006.

In the same period, exports to South Korea grew by 1.58 percent to $1.4 billion while imports grew 0.25 percent to $3.2 billion.

Still, the Philippines incurred trade deficits with Korea over the past four years, which amounted to between $1.66 billion and $1.81 billion

Top merchandise exports to South Korea include semiconductor devices and components; cathodes and parts of cathodes; parts and accessories of automated data processing machines; fresh bananas; oil cake and solid residues from copra.

Anglo declares cash dividend

ANGLO PHILIPPINE HOLDINGS CORP.—a holding company with investments in mining, oil, infrastructure and property development, declared a cash dividend of five centavos per share to all stockholders of record as of Oct. 15, 2007 payable on or before Nov. 8.

This is the second dividend payout by the company this year. In the first half of the year, it declared a 10-centavo cash dividend.

The company, which has investments in Atlas Mining, United Paragon Mining, Edsa Properties, the TriNoma Mall, Metro Rail Transit, and several oil exploration projects, reported a record net income after tax of P289 million in the first half of 2007. This was 131 percent higher than the P125.6 million posted in the same period last year, equivalent to an earnings per share of P0.27 and P0.12, respectively.

In view of the company's profitability over the last three years and the bright prospects of its investment portfolio, the board of directors of Anglo Phil was expecting to declare dividends on a more regular basis.

The company also has an ongoing share-buyback program designed to maximize shareholder returns as the board deems the prevailing market price of its stock to be lower than its intrinsic value.

PRCI directors ask court to lift TRO

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

DIRECTORS OF PHILIPPINE RACing Club Inc., representing 75 percent of the firm's shareholders, asked the Court of Appeals to lift a temporary restraining order barring the company's board from deliberating and voting on a planned property-for-shares swap with subsidiary JTH Holdings Corp.

The TRO was issued by a Makati Regional Trial Court, in response to a petition filed by PRCI minority stockholders who asked the court to stop the transfer of the PRCI property.

In a statement, the PRCI directors said the minority stockholders who sought the TRO hold a mere 5.6-percent stake in PRCI.

"It is ironic that the TRO prevented the entire stockholders of PRCI from acting on the matter of the swapping of the Makati property with its majority controlled subsidiary, JTH Holdings Corp.," PRCI said in a statement.

The company said it was made clear that any stockholder would have the right to dissent and to demand payment of the fair value of his shares in the exchange of the corporate assets.

"The TRO issued by the Makati RTC may have caused more damage than what it may have purported to protect. It has always been known that PRCI intends to move its racetrack out of Makati in order to unlock the full potential value of its Makati property," it said.

In a related development, PRCI minority shareholders urged the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to probe reports that Malaysian investors in the firm might have exceeded the foreign ownership ceiling provided in the Constitution and laws on corporate governance.

In a statement, Lawyer Brigido Dulay, spokesman for minority shareholders, said a recent report of Philippine Dealing System Holdings Corp. (PDS) and the Philippine Stock Exchange showed that PRCI breached the limit on foreign ownership since 2005.

The Malaysian stake in the racing club, which owns and operates the P11-billion Sta. Ana racetrack in Makati , is represented by the Kuala Lumpur-based Magnum Holdings Berhad, which holds four directorial seats in the board.

Pancake House to buy bakeshop, Spanish resto

RESTAURANT CHAIN PANCAKE House is eyeing a bakeshop and a Spanish restaurant for acquisition.

Pancake House chair Martin Lorenzo said the company was allotting between P100 million and P300 million to buy a high-end bakeshop chain and possibly a high-end Spanish restaurant "very soon." He, however, refused to identify these entities.

Lorenzo also said Pancake House would no longer pursue acquisition talks with Goldilocks Bakeshop.

The restaurant chain House is on an expansion binge in Asia, as it intends to open three Pancake House outlets in Malaysia this year and a Teriyaki Boy Japanese restaurant in Vietnam by the first quarter of next year. *Elizabeth S. Lacson*

COL upbeat on economy

ONLINE STOCK BROKERAGE firm CitisecOnline remains confident about the outlook of the Philippine economy for the next 12 months as it continues to reap the benefits of the government's reform program.

This was contained in the company's strategy report for the second half of the year which would be discussed at a forum for COL clients and their guests today at the Asian Institute of Management Conference Center at 5:30 p.m.

The report indicated that the economy's growth trajectory is expected to move to a higher level driven by increased government spending, renewed investments and the accelerating growth in consumer spending.

A mirror of the economy, the real estate industry is now thriving on affordable credit and increasing OFW remittances. "The confluence of the strong demand for housing—particularly from families of OFWs—low interest rates on loans, longer payment terms and lower down payments are driving the growth of this sector," according to the COL report.

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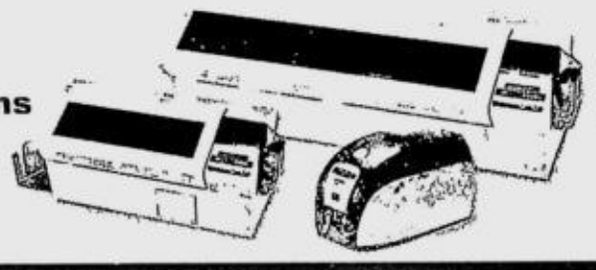

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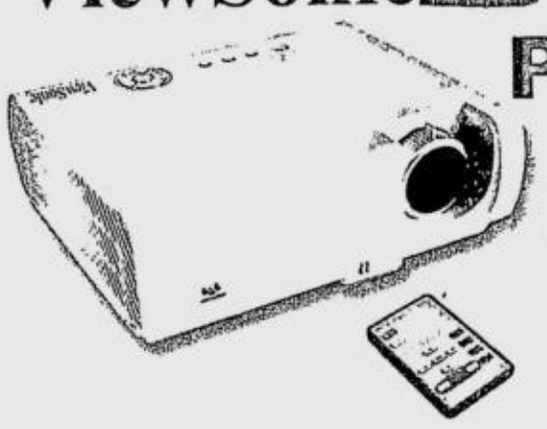

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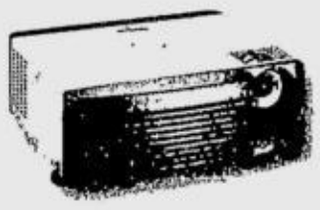

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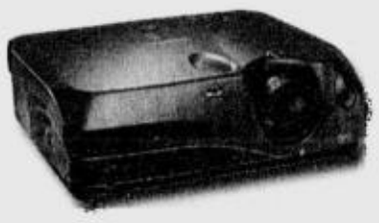

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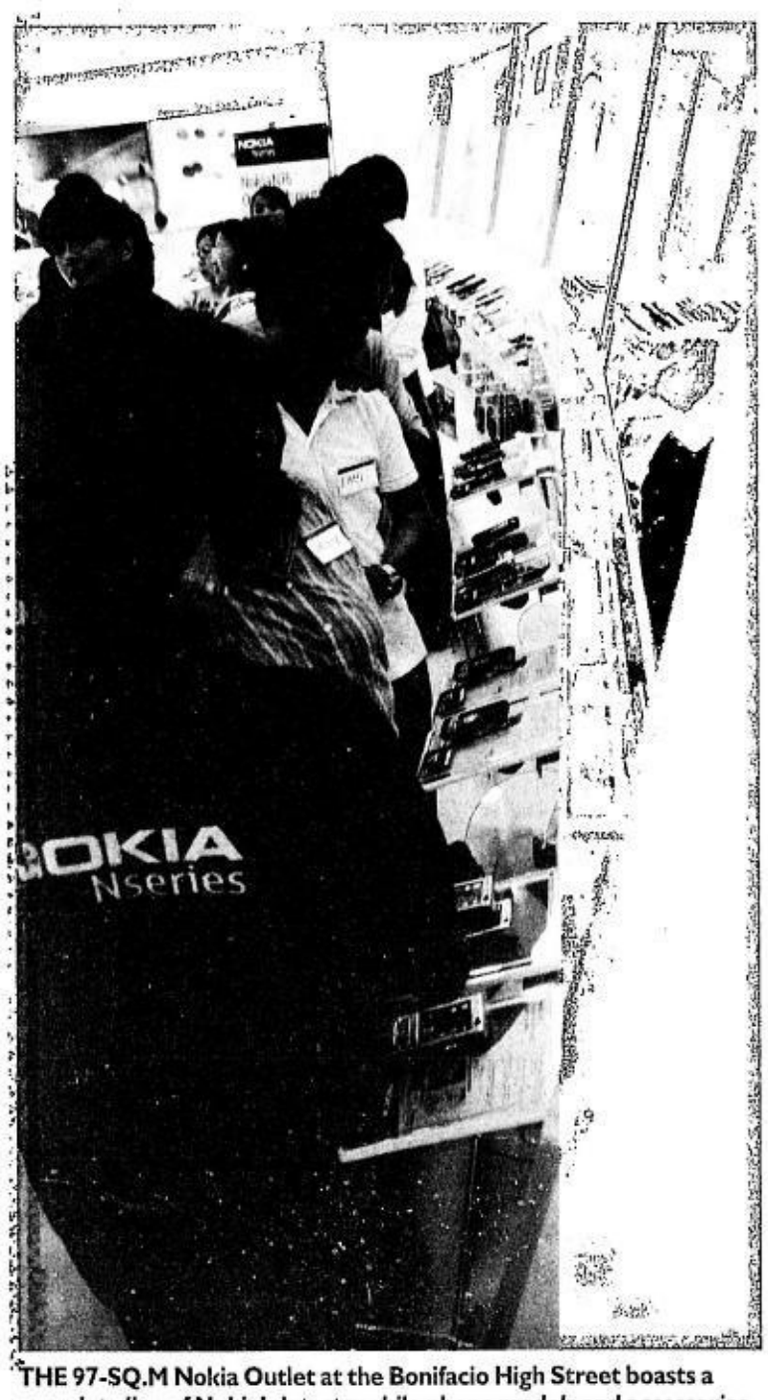

THE 97-SQ.M Nokia Outlet at the Bonifacio High Street boasts a complete line of Nokia's latest mobile phone models and accessories.

Helping users get more out of their cellphones

Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

WE MAY NOT BE aware of it but since 1999, Nokia Philippines has been setting up its own stores around the country—and they are not there just to sell the latest cellphone models or accessories.

These Nokia Stores—already 21 in number—are now offering media transfer and download service, software update, and even tutorials.

"We want to listen even more closely to our customers as well as respond to their needs more directly. As one may have noticed, mobile phones are becoming manufactured to not only carry out phone calls, text messages, but also hold images, videos, music, television, camera, and multimedia of all types," explained Nokia Philippines country manager William Hamilton-Whyte.

With this development, Hamilton-Whyte believed a number of their customers may find it difficult catching up with the technology or getting familiar with all the features installed in their mobile phones.

HAMILTON-WHYTE

New and interesting stuff

"It is a great thing that we are now able to do new and interesting stuff with our mobile phones and Nokia Stores will be able to assist our customers, for example, when they need assistance in configuring their units or when they need a place to download or share their files," he said.

Hamilton-Whyte said that very soon, their consumers would need a place where they can download the photos or the videos they have taken, have them transferred to a storage media for sharing later on.

"We are in the process of providing downloading stations for our customers and we have trained our staff to be knowledgeable of every Nokia model so they could provide technical support and servicing should they need one. Indeed, expect many changes to happen with our Nokia Stores," he promised.

He added that Nokia is aiming to change the experience of learning about and purchasing wireless devices and expects that every Nokia Store in the Philippines will soon be able to provide this.

EVEN deciding on which mobile phone model to buy could be a daunting task and Nokia Stores mission is to significantly narrow down these choices.

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Keeping unwanted noise out

By Charles E. Buban

BY NOW, AUDIOPHILES AND MUSIC lovers should be familiar with Bose's QuietComfort brand of noise-canceling headphones, particularly the second generation QC2.

This full-size (over-the-ear) headphones electronically identify and actively reduces noise while preserving the music, speech or even silence that a number of its users desire.

But while developing its next generation QuietComfort headphones, Bose found that many of QC2's users also desire to use it while on the go and not just inside planes or noisy rooms.

Comfortable to wear

As a result, Bose decided that the third iteration of its popular headphones should be exactly like that—compact, comfortable to wear anywhere yet still as effective in canceling out noise.

Indeed, the QuietComfort 3 is significantly smaller considering that it is now designed just enough to cover the ear.

To keep the ambient sounds, the QC3 employs a cushy memory foam that conforms to the wearer's ears, passively shutting out noise better than most on-ear models that tend to let ambient sounds in.

The QC3 features the same fold-flat design and single detachable cable. But instead of a generic AAA battery, the device now uses a rechargeable lithium-ion battery that slips out of the right ear cup (it is paired to a compact travel charger that fits right into a wall socket, obviating the need for wires or cables).

20 hours

Bose says one would get about 20 hours of battery life and users must remember to keep it always charged since the QC3 won't work as well as or won't accept any other battery type.

So, how do the QuietComfort 3 headphones perform?

While nothing beats QC2's design that go around one's ear (instead of on top of them) in isolating the speaker's sound and keeping ambient sounds out, Bose, nevertheless, has succeeded in its quest to make the QuietComfort more compact while not sacrificing anything in the way of its performance.

On the noise-canceling front, the QC3's circuitry does an impressive job at eliminating certain parts of noise from things like the hum of an aircraft's engines, road noise, and office environment. That doesn't mean one won't hear all that noise, but it does reduce it drastically.

As for the price, the QC3 retails at P24,900, which is P5,000 more than its earlier version.

THE THIRD reiteration of the QuietComfort is significantly smaller and more comfortable to wear anywhere

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Formulates, develops and implements integrated network architectures. Oversees the maintenance of LAN & WAN; Analyzes performance reports or servers, data network equipment and voice network equipment. Analyzes and determines budget requirements, current computer and network systems technology and available vendor offerings to establish optimum computer and network architecture solutions. Plans future enhancements and directions for the company-wide computer network.

REQUIRED SKILLS:

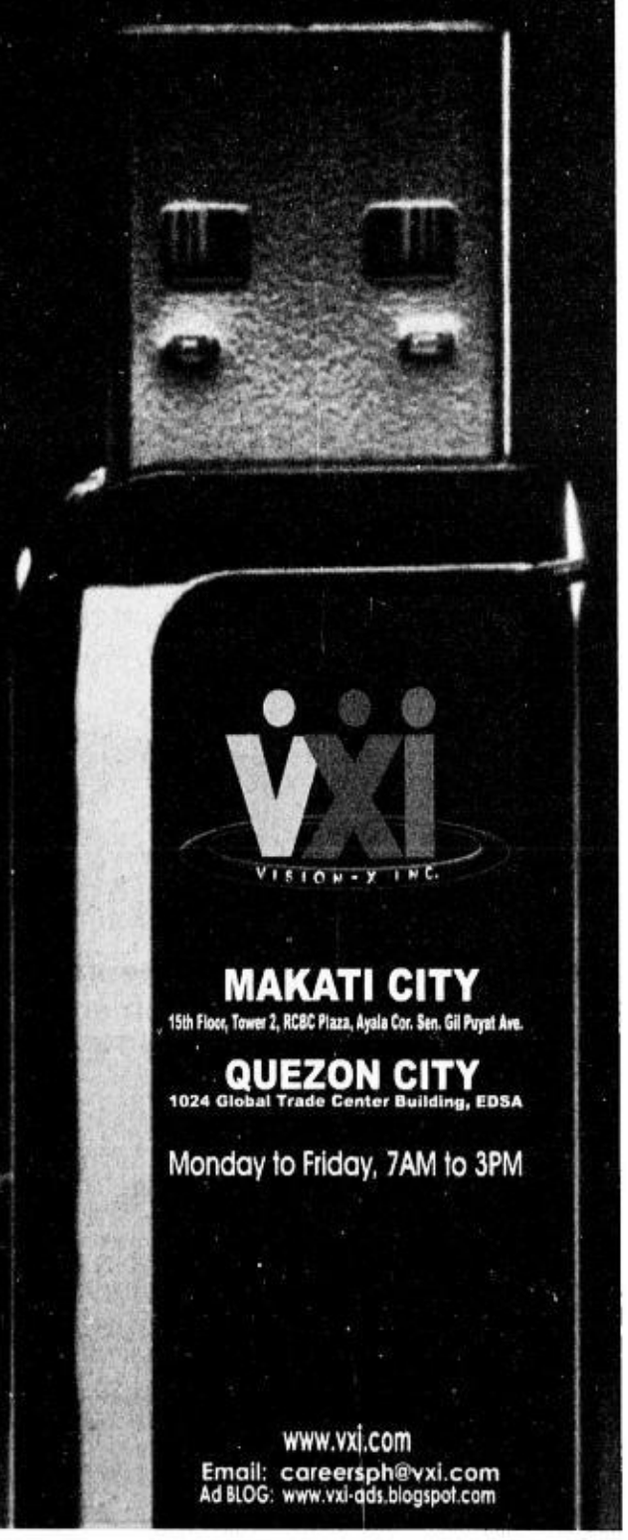
- Windows 2000/2003 Server system administration
- MS Exchange email administration
- Security administration thru MS ISA
- Desktop support skills including hardware troubleshooting
- Backup Administration using Veritas
- Previous call center technical experience a plus

TELCOMS ENGINEER

Oversees the maintenance of Avaya Telephony System. Analyzes performance reports of telephony equipment and voice network equipment. Analyzes and determines budget requirements, telephony and voice network systems technology and available vendor offerings to establish optimum voice architecture solutions. Plans future enhancements and directions for the company-wide computer network.

REQUIRED SKILLS:

- Avaya Site Administration
- Previous Avaya telephony administration / hardware support and maintenance setups
- Previous call center technical experience a plus
- Extensive Telecoms background



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IBM warns jobseekers, starts probe against 'namesakes'

By Riza T. Olchondra

IBM HAS WARNED JOBSEEKERS LOOKING to work for the tech giant that some companies have illegally attached 'IBM' to their names.

The firm said investigations are underway on the unauthorized use of its name among local companies.

"It has come to our attention that there have been several individuals who have been illegally using our trade name and trademark for personal gain," IBM Daksh said in a statement.

IBM Daksh is a call center business that is wholly owned by International Business Machines Corp.

"IBM Electronic Data Processing (Philippines), Inc. and/or IBM Triden Shared Services Center are organizations not recognized or affiliated to IBM globally in any capacity," IBM Daksh said.

The company added that it has not authorized any in-house recruitment activities out of Baguio nor has employed the services of any third party group/individual.

An IBM Daksh official said the unauthorized use of the firm's trade name and the IBM trademark logo is unlawful, and violators will be subject to legal civil and possibly criminal sanctions.

He added that police are investigating the unauthorized use of 'IBM.'

The only recognized IBM companies in the country are IBM Philippines Inc., IBM Solutions Delivery Inc., IBM Business Services Inc., and IBM Daksh Business Process Services Philippines Inc.

IBM Daksh runs its recruitment and training operations from Mondays to Fridays at the EDSA Central Pavilion, a dedicated facility in Mandaluyong City. Its satellite recruitment office is located on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City.

₱50B in RTBs sold; gov't may cut short offer period

Maturity of old bonds boosted liquidity of investors

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT HAS SOLD P50 billion worth of retail treasury bonds (RTBs) as of Friday, exceeding previous projections.

Finance Undersecretary Roberto Tan, who is also the acting national treasurer, told reporters the high level of RTB sales was due largely to the recent maturity of previously issued retail bonds which boosted the liquidity of investors.

The Bureau of the Treasury earlier said some P21 billion in RTBs matured two weeks ago.

Tan said some investors who wanted to reinvest their income from their previous RTBs had bought the newly issued bonds. The government had set a minimum of P8 billion worth of RTBs to be sold during the offer period, but estimates showed the government could sell as much as P40 billion worth of these bonds.

The government has been offering three- and five-year RTBs since last Monday to accommodate requests for the issuance of government securities that will cater to small investors.

The minimum investment for RTBs was set at only P5,000.

The offer period was supposed to end Tuesday, but Tan said Treasury officials would decide today whether to cut the offering today given the huge volume of RTB sales.

During the price-setting auction held last Monday, the three-year RTBs fetched 6.875 percent while the rate for the five-year RTBs settled at 7.125 percent.

Tan said the government considered the rates acceptable, as these were comparable with the rates for regular treasury bonds traded in the secondary market. The rates were affordable for the government and attractive enough for investors.

The market response to the latest issuance of RTBs was much warmer than that for the offering in November last year, when the government was able to sell only P8.3 billion worth of RTBs. Treasury officials said investors found the interest rate then, set at 5.875 percent, too low.

Because of the huge RTB sales, Tan said, the government would cancel another auction schedule for regular government securities. He said the supposed auction for seven-year treasury bonds on Aug. 7, when the government was programmed to raise P7 billion, would also be canceled.

Earlier, the government shelved the supposed treasury bill auction today and the T-bonds auction last July 24.

First Metro Investment Corp. and BPI Capital Corp. were tapped by the government as issue managers for the RTBs.

Tan said the RTB issuance elicited warm market reception despite the presence of a competing investment facility of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas because investors were looking for a longer-term investment option.

The BSP in May opened a facility that allowed trust departments of banks to deposit their funds directly in the central bank. Trust departments and state-owned firms are being encouraged by the BSP to place their excess funds in the BSP by offering interest rates that are higher than the rates on government securities with comparable tenors.

FIRST GEN Corp. president and COO Federico R. Lopez (left), chair Oscar M. Lopez and UP Diliman president Emerlinda R. Roman chat while waiting for the start of the ceremony held to formally announce the establishment of the Oscar M. Lopez Sterling Professorial Chair in Law and Economics at the University of the Philippines. These will be made possible with a P3-M donation from First Gen to the UP-School of Economics. The professorial chair will contribute to the enhancement and development of academic disciplines necessary in regulatory policy and practice.

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Trademark listings in RP seen to surge

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TRADEMARK REGISTRATIONS with the Intellectual Property Office are seen to continue to surge as the agency adopts measures to have one of the fastest approval process in the world.

Adrian S. Cristobal Jr., IP Philippines director general, said in an interview that listings increased 21 percent with 13,263 trademarks approved in 2006 from 10,475 in 2005.

"To date, just halfway through the year, we have already approved the registration of 9,936 marks," Cristobal said.

"We are confident of still another high-growth year this year considering that trademarks registration is not seasonal like business name registration, which is done mainly at the start of the year," he added.

When talking about trademarks, Cristobal was actually referring to four kinds of marks that distinguish goods (trademark) and services (service mark), and even enterprises (trade name) and websites (Internet domain name) from one another.

From 2003 to date, IP Philippines has approved the listing of 43,457 marks. Of these, 34.2 percent or 14,873 are domestic marks while 21 percent are from American firms; 7 percent Japanese; 5 percent Swiss, and 4 percent German.

"The registration process from filing to approval used to take around four years, which was a disincentive for business owners to protect their mark," he said.

Cristobal said there were many cases where enterprises complain about and take legal action against copycats.

"But their case gets weak because their marks were not registered," he said.

Cristobal explained that IP Philippines could now bring an application for mark registration through the entire process in as fast as six months.

The agency was able to pare down the four-year waiting time to two years in 2005 and 12 to 15 months in 2006.

Harbour Centre-MPIC push for N. Harbor bid

HARBOUR CENTRE PORT TERminal and Metro Pacific Investments Corp. (MPIC) are expecting to receive soon from the Philippine Ports Authority the bid documents to support their joint offer for the 25-year concession to operate and manage the Manila North Harbor.

Harbour Centre president Michael Romero said he was confident the PPA would soon present him and MPIC chair Manuel Pangilinan the bid documents for the project even as the agency declared on Wednesday that its special bid and awards committee had suspended the bid process.

Romero said the joint venture of Harbour Centre and MPIC has been declared by the PPA eligible to bid for the Manila North Harbor privatization.

In a letter to Harbour Centre and MPIC, Leopoldo Bungubung, chair of PPA special bids and awards committee, said the July 24 bidding was suspended.

Barclays raises ...

From page B2

ever, economic managers said they chose to be a little conservative and would not increase the target despite the robust growth in the first quarter.

"Remittances from overseas workers rose by 26.1 percent in the year to end-April. The strength of remittances, which are being supported by the strength of global growth and high oil prices, has led us to revise up our 2007 and 2008 current account forecasts," Barclays said.

The investment bank said its GDP growth projection for the Philippines this year entailed an expected year-on-year growth in personal consumption by 6 percent, better than last year's 5.5 percent.

Government spending is seen to grow by 7 percent from a year-ago, higher than the 6.1-percent growth recorded last year.

Bullish on the economy's ability to attract more investments this year, Barclays said it projected fixed capital formation, or investments in capital equipment, to grow by 6 percent this year, accelerating from 1.4 percent last year.

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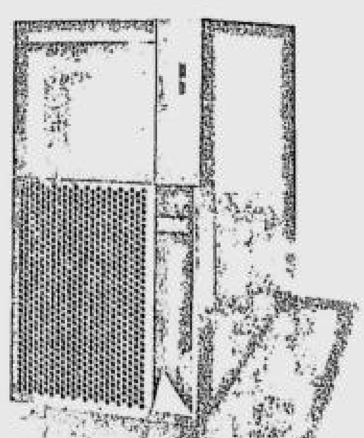

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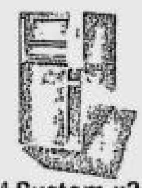

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Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Maynila, Pilipinas
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project / Brief Description	One (1) lot – Supply, delivery, installation and commissioning of 140 KVA Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) with redundancy for the BSP – Head Office Data Center
Approved Budget for the Contract	P11,200,000.00
Completion Period	The project consisting of supply, delivery, installation and commissioning of the UPS shall be completed within 120 calendar days after receipt of the approved contract

Prospective bidders should have undertaken a similar project awarded and completed from Y2002 to present amounting to at least 50% of the Approved Budget for the Contract. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s). Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activites	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	starting 30 July 2007 (not later than 1:30 p.m.)
2. Pre-Bid Conference	10 August 2007, 2:00 p.m.
3. Opening of Bids	28 August 2007, 2:00 p.m.
4. Bid Evaluation	) These shall be in accordance with the prescribed periods
5. Post-qualification	) allowed in the Implementing Rules & Regulations
6. Notice of Award	) (IRR)-A of R.A. No. 9184 dated 10 January 2003.

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P5,600.00 to the BSP Cashier.

The BSP assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR
Chairman

(PDI–July 30, 2007)

PNOC DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
A SUBSIDIARY OF PHILIPPINE NATIONAL OIL COMPANY

TO ALL STOCKHOLDERS

We are requesting all stockholders of record of PNOC DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT CORPORATION (PDMC), formerly FILOIL REFINERY CORPORATION (FRC), to update or notify the company of their updated postal addresses, contact numbers and email addresses as soon as possible in order to facilitate the efficient dissemination of information regarding any stockholders meeting, dividend declaration and stock repurchase program and other corporate actions. You can also notify the company of lost and destroyed stock certificates. Please get in touch with Professional Stock Transfer, Inc. at Unit 1003 City & Land Mega Plaza, ADB Avenue cor. Garnet Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City or call 6872733 & 6874053 or PDMC at 5F PNOC Building 6, Energy Center, Meritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City or call 8402423 & 8402653 for more inquiries.

Thank you.

(Sgd.) ATTY. JOSELITO D. GONZALES
Corporate Secretary

(PDI–July 30, 2007)

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One (1) Loc. Leg. Staff Officer II, SG-13, Bachelor's degree rel. to the job, CS Prof

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OBITUARIES

JUANITA *"Nene"* LESACA GARCIA

of Quezon City & Botolan, Zambales

August 13, 1911 – July 28, 2007

Wife of **Remigio, Sr.** (†), and loving mother to her children **Remigio, Jr.** (†) & **Marie**, **Rodolfo** & **Sonya**, **Herminia** & **Oscar Gonzales** (†), **Nancy** & **Ren Pangilinan**, **Ricardo** & **Ma. Elsa**, **Corazon**, **Ramon** & **Noemi**, **Robert** & **Nini**, **Marlu**, **Renato** & **Andrea**; sister **Rosario**; grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Her remains lie in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels & Crematorium, Inc. at Chapel Premiere I, Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City.

Interment will be at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City on Thursday, August 2, 2007 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

In lieu of flowers, donations to EMMAUS Home for the Aged will be deeply appreciated.

EPIFANIO MABUNGA RED SR.

April 7, 1925 – July 26, 2007

Peacefully joined our Lord at the age of 82

His bereaved spouse **LEONOR LUCAS RED**, their children & spouses **IKE & JOYCE, NENETTE & NES, DANNY & LENIE, EENA & NILO, CYNTHIA & ALLAN, JON & CAROL, RAYMOND & SHEILA, POPO (†), RACHEL & JING, ROY & PING**, and their grandchildren, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, G. Araneta Ave, Sta. Mesa Manila, after the funeral Mass at 9AM, Tuesday, July 31, 2007.

Interment will be at Loyola Memorial Park Resurrection Garden, Marikina City.

Our Dearly Beloved

EVANGEL (Angel) H. FRANCO

Born: September 21, 1955 -- Died: July 26, 2007

Peacefully joined his Creator at the age of 51.

His loving family, his parents **SIMPLICIO C. FRANCO** (†) & **JOSEFA HERRERA FRANCO** (†), sisters **TELAY & DURING; ZENNY & GENIE, LOLIT, TITA & BOY** (†), **JOSIE & GUNTER, ESPIE & TONY; SOL & LARRY; BAMBIE & REU**; brothers **BOY & NORMA; EDDIE & JANE** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul

His body lies in state at 121 M. L. Quezon Street, Hagonoy, Taguig City.

Interment will be tomorrow, July 31, 2007 at Hagonoy Catholic Cemetery after the 2 p.m. Mass.

Message of Thanks
The family of
Ms. VICKY LIABAN
who died on July 16, 2007
after giving birth to a lovely daughter, expresses their gratitude to all friends and acquaintances, who in their moment of bereavement, have condoled with them.

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People, Events & Products

Fight off dehydration the healthy way

SPORTS DRINKS, ALSO KNOWN AS electrolyte- and carbohydrate-containing beverages (ECBs), is a physiologic "first-aid" treatment to prevent dehydration.

This was the message of Dr. Lester A. Deniega, pediatric infectious disease specialist, in a satellite symposium sponsored by Otsuka Pharmaceuticals during the 44th annual convention of the Philippine Pediatric Society recently.

Dehydration occurs when the body loses water and electrolytes through perspiration, and it is more likely to lose more if the person is involved in strenuous physical activities or in warm climates. The usual remedy for dehydration is to gain the lost water and electrolytes. Active people or those involved in sports often resort to sports drinks or ECBs.

Deniega emphasized the significance of ECBs in fighting off dehydration, referring to it as a physiologic "first aid" treatment for dehydration which can prevent complications of dehydration, including heat stroke. Aside from its nourishing effect to prevent dehydration, Deniega also said ECBs can be a beneficial supplement for diarrhea treatment as it helps replace essential electrolytes and fluids lost with the watery diarrhea.

In ECBs, the taste, level of acidity, and calcium content are also important, says Deniega. Otsuka recently launched Pocari Sweat, a new refreshing sports drink in the market. It is less acidic with more calcium content and is also a healthy and effective companion for diarrhea treatment. Most of all, it can replace the electrolytes in the body lost due to excessive perspiration which usually happens when engaging in sports and strenuous activities.

The refreshing taste of the new Pocari Sweat makes it ideal for everyday thirst-quenching. Pocari Sweat is now available in all major supermarkets, convenience stores and drugstores nationwide.

Shown are (from left) Dr. Lester A. Deniega, Dr. Anna Marie S. Putulin, Dr. Roberto Espos, Hirofumi Inoue (president, Otsuka Pharmaceuticals), Leopoldo T. Dimerin (sales and marketing director) and Kervin M. Dela Cruz (marketing manager) during the 44th annual convention of the Philippine Pediatric Society.

Vision training can help recover 20/20 vision

AFTER STARING FOR HOURS AT your computer, do your eyes begin to feel sore? If your work in front of a computer screen has been stretching long hours daily, chances are you're wearing thick glasses or contact lenses.

Eyecare experts agree, however, that close viewing or "near work", rather than computer monitors or small prints, causes defective vision. Genetics, aging, infection, emotional stress and chronic diseases have been tagged also as possible culprits.

Do we have an alternative to conventional methods that may stem the progress of defective eyesight and perhaps restore clear vision? If you ask Leo Angart, the answer is a resounding yes!

Vision Training will be held on Aug. 18 and 19 (10 to 6 p.m.) at the AIM Conference Center, Benavidez corner Trasierra Streets, Legaspi Village, Makati City; Magic Eyes will be on Aug. 17 and 20 (3 to 6 p.m.) at Prince Plaza 2, Dela Rosa corner Gallardo Streets, Makati City. Magic Eyes participants should be accompanied by an adult who will assist the child in the exercises.

For details, call 753-2909 and 753-2910 / 0915-6705746 and look for Fe, Gina or Joyce. You can also e-mail pranavita@pv-center.com.

RP education goes high tech, adopts Web TV

China extends P26B in aid to pursue ambitious project

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION has embraced Web-based television in an attempt to use popular technology to transmit refresher courses in math, science, and English to all teachers, and even out-of-school youth.

Education Secretary Jesli Lapuz said here last Friday that P26 billion in official development assistance (ODA) from China and general Chinese know-how have afforded President Macapagal Arroyo a technology-transfer deal with the Tsing Hua University, China's equivalent of the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

He said that P5 billion will be used to buy computers and TV sets; lease Internet services and link all 36,000 public schools through the Internet.

This is the best medium available to produce an army of "master teachers," by updating the skills of all licensed teachers using education techniques and textbook information, Lapuz told participants during the Go Negosyo Conference at Teachers Camp here.

He said government educators have also improved technical education by giving graduates the credentials they need to teach certificate courses.

The government plans to pilot the interactive television and Web-based programs of CyberEd by yearend.

What's more exciting about CyberEd, Lapuz said, was the fact that some universities have offered to open their library and research studies to these teachers.

This "open access" to homegrown university researches and books is unprecedented, Lapuz said, and will help the country come closer to a United Nations-inspired goal of providing education to every Filipino.

Advocates of alternative education had pointed out that most Filipinos are likely to have easier access to TV sets and DVDs than schools.

Elmer Soriano, president of Internet firm Thinklab, has been persuading teachers to tap the technology used by what he refers to as the "*tsinelas* (slippers)" crowd.

Thinklab is promoting what it calls "hyper-classrooms" manned by private experts.

Lapuz said the government is finally heeding that advocacy by developing cyber classrooms.

In his speech before the conference participants, mostly teenagers, Lapuz said: "CyberEd will enable you to benefit from the best teachers in the country via our live classes, wherein the best master teachers will be teaching students in virtual classroom studios, which will give you an interactive classroom experience like no other."

He said: "These live classes will be beamed via satellite, even to the most far-flung schools that require these teachers' expertise the most. And it will enable you to gain access to a rich menu of resource materials, which are currently unavailable in most public schools."

To create this huge teaching force, the government must reach 475,000 teachers in one sweep, Lapuz said in a briefing.

Today, DepEd spends up to P1 billion on refresher courses, but public school teachers do not have enough time to attend them.

"We can't remove teachers from the classrooms. Experts say teachers have to undergo refresher courses frequently to make them effective, [and] not twice a year [which is the practice today]," Lapuz said in Filipino.

CyberEd's Web television programs run up to 12 channels, which are equivalent to the grade levels a teacher is specializing in, he said.

Mining firm aims for green labeling

By Redempto Anda
Inquirer Southern Luzon

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Encouraged by the early success of its reforestation projects, Berong Nickel Mining Corp. (BNC) now wants to venture into the lucrative carbon trading market.

BNC operates a major nickel ore extraction project in Quezon, 157 kilometers south of this city.

"We have planted 78,000 trees in just six months into our operations, and our survival rate is encouraging at 90 percent. We can do carbon trading and the community here can make money out of this," Keith Halford, a top official of BNC, told the INQUIRER.

Halford said money to be raised from the carbon market would finance additional community projects.

"We have the resources and manpower support to undertake a successful reforestation program. We can convert this into tradable carbon credits and earn money for the community," Halford said.

Under the carbon trading program facilitated here by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), companies with environment-friendly projects, such as BNC with its reforestation program, can sell their "carbon credits" to carbon emitting countries and companies forced to meet their cap on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

In effect, companies or countries can breach their emission limits provided they invest in environmental projects that will make up for their excess.

Reforestation projects, functioning as carbon sinks, are generally regarded as tradable currencies that polluters may purchase in forms of cash, equity or in-kind contributions.

BNC is a joint venture project between Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. and Toledo Mining Corp., which is publicly listed on the London Stock Exchange.

Halford said that BNC has employed 70 locals to work on the reforestation and other rehabilitation projects of the company under its environmental management program.

BNC signed a Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) in June this year and plans to become a major nickel supplier, with its estimated nickel ore reserve of some 3.5 million tons.

Nickel is a prized mineral because it is a key ingredient in the manufacturing of stainless steel.

With China importing as much nickel as it can get its hands on, there has been a boom in nickel mining operations across the globe, the Philippines included.

IMPROVED CONNECTIVITY

Eaga transport ministers sign air, sea pacts

By Dennis Jay Santos
Inquirer Mindanao

DAVAO CITY—TRANSPORT MINisters from the four-country East Asean Growth Area (Eaga) met here on Thursday and signed agreements aimed at addressing concerns hounding air, sea and land links.

Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza said among the issues threshed out concerned mutual security and transportation of air cargo.

Mendoza, who met with his counterparts Pehin Dato Abu Bakar Apong (Brunei), Jusman Syafii Djamal (Indonesia) and Dato Long See Wool (Malaysia), said the second Eaga transport ministers' meeting would go a long way in improving connectivity in the growth polygon.

MENDOZA

"This meeting is substantial and beneficial to our country," Mendoza said.

He said the ministers agreed to upgrade strategic infrastructure facilities to accommodate the anticipated increase in passengers and cargo traffic in the sub-region.

Mendoza said they also called on airline companies to forge partnerships and alliances "to take advantage of the vast opportunities presented by the expanded implementation of the fifth freedom rights, as taken up during the 3rd BIMP-Eaga summit held last Jan. 12 in Cebu."

During the Cebu summit, Eaga-member countries agreed to adopt an open skies policy.

Mendoza said for their part, they pledged to find ways to improve security to protect the traveling public.

Of the four Eaga countries, Indonesia and the Philippines have suffered much from terror attacks carried out by the Jemaah Islamiyah.

"We are going to offer a safer travel," Mendoza said. *With a report from Judy Quiros, Inquirer Mindanao*

PLDT group prepares to increase capacity

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE PHILIPPINE LONG DISTance Telephone Co. (PLDT) and its affiliate companies are working to increase the carrying capacity of its network by as much as five times, president and CEO Napoleon Nazareno said.

For starters, PLDT unit Smart Communications Inc. has finished work on a new satellite gateway in Subic.

It was built in partnership with global satellite giant Inmarsat plc.

The new gateway will expand the coverage of Smart's maritime satellite service, Smart Link, by using Inmarsat's worldwide satellite network and the Garuda 1 Satellite of another PLDT subsidiary, ACeS Philippines.

The partnership will also enable Aces Philippines to distribute Inmarsat's new handheld and fixed satellite mobile phones for Filipinos abroad.

PLDT chairperson Manuel Pangilinan said in a separate interview that the telco will offer mobile products from global satellite leader Inmarsat.

"We (PLDT and Aces Philippines) are their partners in the Philippines," he said.

Meanwhile, another PLDT subsidiary, the Subic Telecommunications Co. Inc. (SubicTel), is investing P212 million in a project to make the Subic Bay Freeport Zone a fiber optic gateway for information and communications technology (ICT) companies in northeastern Philippines.

The new network will span 285 kilometers of fiber optic cables.

These will form several redundant loops covering Angeles, Clark, Porac, San Fernando, Guagua, Lubao and Floridablanca in Pampanga, and Dinalupihan in Bataan, Subic Town in Zambales, and Subic Bay Freeport Zone in Olongapo.

The PLDT group is also investing hundreds of millions as a partner in several consortia to expand Internet capacity for the telco and the rest of Southeast Asia.

PLDT forked over $100 million to help upgrade the $350-million APCN2 (Asia Pacific Cable Network 2).

"We are participating in projects to help prevent the (Internet and long-distance voice) disruptions caused by the Taiwan earthquake from happening again," PLDT spokesperson Ramon Isberto said.

Online brokerage taps growing Cebuano mart

By Irene R. Sino Cruz
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—RECOGNIZING THE huge potential of the Cebu market, an online stockbrokerage firm has started conducting awareness seminars to get retail investors to put their money in the stock market.

Conrado F. Bate, president and chief executive officer of CitisecOnline (COL), said that of the company's 3,000 clients, less than 200 come from the Visayas, most of whom are from Cebu.

"Cebu is virgin territory. There is no reason why Cebuanos could not participate in the robust stock market," Bate said in a briefing here.

He said that the company was concentrating on retail investors since there are few stockbrokerage firms servicing this segment.

In the past, Bate said, retail investors have no chance to participate in the stock market because most stockbrokerage firms serviced big accounts.

Investors can open an account with COL with as little as P5,000.

But with COL reaching out to the countryside, Bate said he expected the retail investor base to increase.

"CitisecOnline strongly believes that investor education is one of our key initiatives as we believe it is the cornerstone of successful online trading," Bate said.

With continued growth of the country's economy, he urged retail investors to take advantage of the opportunities in the stock market.

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES
Ang Bangkong May Damdaming Bayan

STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Head Office and Branches)
As of June 30, 2007

ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Items	P	6,314,022,539
Due from Bangko Sentral		44,578,877,947
Due from Other Banks		1,066,202,728
Interbank Loans Receivable		30,386,773,216
Trading Account Securities (Net)		4,173,353,378
Investment in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		119,431,345,213
Loans and Discounts and Advances (Net)		115,886,702,989
Underwriting Accounts (Net)		82,320,000
Equity Investments (Net)		3,134,472,430
Bank Premises, Furniture,Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		4,561,973,681
Other Assets (Net):		
Property Owned/Acquired		12,050,241,510
Others		26,180,592,770
TOTAL ASSETS	P	367,846,878,401
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	102,569,254,941
Savings Deposits		145,472,512,375
Time Deposits		30,033,639,805
Special/Other Deposits		233,974,162
Due to Bangko Sentral		63,694,288
Due to Banks		16,606,338
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		841,536,158
Bills Payable:		
BSP-Rediscounting/Special Programs		438,546,256
Others		30,472,174,506
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		3,183,341,479
Other Liabilities		11,807,022,793
Unsecured Subordinated Debt (Inclusive of Unamortized Premium/Discount)		6,936,000,000
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	332,068,303,101
Add: Minority Interest in Allied Undertakings/ Subsidiaries/Affiliates		
Capital Stock	P	11,971,000,000
Surplus		10,781,787,036
Surplus Reserves		3,169,448,508
Other Capital Accounts		9,856,339,756
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		35,778,575,300
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	367,846,878,401
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit		2,825,612,414
Bills for Collection		93,974,396
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		12,653,437,280
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		(1,104,914,048)
Assets Held Under Trust and Investment Management Agreements		
Invested in:		
- Government Securities		21,956,411,839
- Other Securities, Debt Instruments and Shares of Stocks		280,387,227
- Loans and Discounts		171,668,457
- Other Assets		17,330,816,606
Accountabilities:		
- Trust and Other Fiduciary		26,713,263,722
- Common Trust Funds		177,817,415
- Investment/Fund Management		12,848,202,992
Other Contingent Accounts		262,810,919
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	54,470,205,090

OTHER INFORMATION

1 Deposits of:		
a. Government	P	181,780,058,856
b. Banks		7,182,492,190
c. Trust Department		782,136,198
2. Compliance with Magna Carta Law:		
a. Prescribed Ratio of Compliance for 6% (Small Enterprises)		19.39%
b. Prescribed Ratio of Compliance for 2% (Medium Enterprises)		3.80%
3. Amount of Non-Performing Loans		9,290,035,378*
4 Ratio of Non-Performing Loans to Total Loan Portfolio		5.76 %
5. Amount of Classified Loans and Other Risk Assets		30,593,030,891
6. General Provision for Loan Losses		1,400,597,722
7. Specific Provision for Loan Losses		13,511,731,849
8. Return on Equity (ROE)		12.36%
9. Amount of DOSRI Loans/Advances		27,544,862,964
10. Ratio of DOSRI Loans/Advances to Total Loan Portfolio		17.09%
11. Amount of Past Due DOSRI Loans/Advances		276,403,910
12. Ratio of DOSRI Loans/Advances to Total Loan Portfolio		0.17%

** Includes Loans Classified as "Loss" which are fully covered by Allowance for Probable Losses amounting to P414,372,747.54*

I/We, ANDRES C. SARMIENTO and GILDA E. PICO of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above Statement of Condition are true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge and belief

Sgd. ANDRES C SARMIENTO
SVP, Controllership Group

Sgd. GILDA E. PICO
President & CEO

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 26th day of July 2007 in Manila City, affiants exhibiting to me their Residence Certificate No. 01578477, issued in Manila City on January 5, 2007 and Residence Certificate No. 05135611 issued in Calamba, Laguna on January 3, 2007.

Doc. No. 4
Page No. 2
Book No. VI
Series of 2007

EFREN O. BRILLANTE
Notary Public
Until December 31, 2007
PTR No. 5362393/1-12-07/Manila
IBP No. 02453/1-13-07/Quezon City

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Bank and Financial Subsidiaries)
As of June 30, 2007

ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Items	P	6,318,016,385
Due from Bangko Sentral		44,578,877,947
Due from Other Banks		1,070,390,297
Interbank Loans Receivable		30,386,773,216
Trading Account Securities (Net)		4,173,353,378
Investment in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		119,459,364,500
Loans and Discounts and Advances (Net)		116,313,471,053
Underwriting Accounts (Net)		82,320,000
Equity Investments (Net)		2,541,476,789
Bank Premises, Furniture,Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		4,650,134,659
Other Assets (Net):		
Property Owned/Acquired		12,064,103,953
Others		26,837,231,955
TOTAL ASSETS	P	368,475,514,132
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	102,559,492,506
Savings Deposits		145,423,803,657
Time Deposits		30,033,639,805
Special/Other Deposits		233,974,162
Due to Bangko Sentral		63,694,288
Due to Banks		16,606,338
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		841,536,158
Bills Payable:		
BSP-Rediscounting/Special Programs		438,546,256
Others		30,528,174,506
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		3,590,755,918
Other Liabilities		11,805,714,521
Unsecured Subordinated Debt (Inclusive of Unamortized Premium/Discount)		6,936,000,000
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	332,471,936,115
Add: Minority Interest in Allied Undertakings/ Subsidiaries/Affiliates		
Capital Stock	P	11,971,000,000
Surplus		11,006,787,753
Surplus Reserves		3,169,448,508
Other Capital Accounts		9,856,339,756
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		36,003,576,017
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	368,475,514,132
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit	P	2,825,612,414
Bills for Collection		93,974,396
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		12,653,437,280
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		(1,104,914,048)
Assets Held Under Trust and Investment Management Agreements		
Invested in:		
- Government Securities		21,956,411,839
- Other Securities, Debt Instruments and Shares of Stocks		280,387,227
- Loans and Discounts		171,668,457
- Other Assets		17,330,816,606
Accountabilities:		
- Trust and Other Fiduciary		26,713,263,722
- Common Trust Funds		177,817,415
- Investment/Fund Management		12,848,202,992
Other Contingent Accounts		262,810,919
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	54,470,205,090

OTHER INFORMATION

1. Deposits of:		
a. Government	P	181,780,058,856
b. Banks		7,182,492,190
c. Trust Department		782,136,198
2. List of Bank's Financial Subsidiaries		
a. LBP Leasing Corporation		
b. LBP Financial Services, SPA		
c. LBP Remittance Co., USA		

I/We, ANDRES C. SARMIENTO and GILDA E. PICO of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above Consolidated Statement of Condition are true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge and belief.

Sgd. ANDRES C. SARMIENTO
SVP, Controllership Group

Sgd. GILDA E. PICO
President & CEO

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Book No. VI
Series of 2007

EFREN O. BRILLANTE
Notary Public
Until December 31, 2007
PTR No. 5362393/1-12-07/Manila
IBP No. 02453/1-13-07/Quezon City

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Secretary, Dept. of Finance

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Vice Chairman

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Secretary, Dept. of Labor and Employment

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BUSINESS

15 firms seen to vie for Transco concession

PSALM hopes to break string of failed bids this time around

By Abigail L. Ho

FOLLOWING A RECENT ROADshow in London, Singapore and Hong Kong, the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. has received informal expressions of interest from at least 15 entities for the 25-year National Transmission Corp. concession.

Froilan Tampinco, PSALM vice president for asset management and electricity trading, said the 15 entities included three that prequalified during the last bidding round for the concession agreement.

These included the group composed of Citadel Holdings Corp. (60 percent) and Italy's Terna SPA (40 percent); the consortium of local firm Triratna Holdings Corp. (60 percent), Malaysia's Tenaga Nasional Berhad (5 percent) and Newbridge Asia IV LP (35 percent); and the group of Monte Oro Grid Resources Corp. (60 percent) and China's State Grid Corp. (40 percent).

Local firm Triratna is represented by SM Investments vice chair Henry Sy Jr., United Laboratories Corp. chair Joselito Campos Jr. and San Miguel Corp. president Ramon Ang.

A Canadian group and an Indian company had likewise expressed interest in bidding for the Transco concession, Tampinco said.

PSALM issued the bid invitation for the Transco concession last July 23. The bidding package would be released starting Aug. 1. Interested parties have until 5 p.m. on Aug. 24 to submit their expressions of interest.

The deadline for the submission of prequalification proposals had been scheduled for Sept. 21, with a pre-bid conference to be conducted on Nov. 5. All final bids should be in by 10 a.m. on Dec. 12.

For the third time since 2003, bidding for the 25-year Transco concession was declared a failure when only one of three prequalified bidders—the Citadel-Terna consortium—submitted its final technical and financial bid by the noon deadline on Feb. 5.

This time around, PSALM president Jose Ibazeta expressed confidence that Transco would be transferred to the private sector.

ALL IN THE FAMILY
At left, Henry Sy Sr. (holding a cane), doyen of the SM Group, is assisted by his son, Harley, during the meeting of Banco de Oro Unibank stockholders held last week at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel. Above, Teresita (seated), daughter of the elder Sy, has a word with bank CEO Nestor Tan. Banco de Oro expects to post a net income of P7.05 billion in 2007. RUDY ESPERAS

PNOC-EDC eyes Napocor assets on auction block

THE PNOC ENERGY DEVELOPMent Corp. (PNOC-EDC) will join the bidding for National Power Corp.'s geothermal assets as soon as it secures the consent of the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp.

Paul Aquino, PNOC-EDC president, said he would write PSALM to seek clarification on whether the company, 53 percent of which is privately owned, could join the bidding for the Napocor assets.

"Whether we're fully privatized or 60-percent privatized or 50-percent privatized, it's the same banana," Aquino told reporters. "Now, we believe we can. But we will write PSALM about our eligibility to bid for Napocor plants."

If PSALM were to tell PNOC-EDC that it could participate in the auctions, then the company would definitely look at all the Napocor geothermal assets on the auction block, he said.

"We're not talking of any specific plant," Aquino added. "We're just saying that we're 53-percent private, and we're no longer considered a (government-owned or -controlled corporation), as certified by the Department of Energy. The question is can we bid?"

PSALM vice president for asset management and electricity trading Froilan Tampinco said PNOC-EDC's request for clarification would be carefully studied.

"If they're now considered private and if they will prequalify, then they can bid," Tampinco said in a separate interview.

PSALM plans to sell the Tiwi-Makban geothermal facilities later this year and the Palinpinon and Tongonan plants next year.

Abigail L. Ho

Due to revenue shortfall, gov't may sell more bonds

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT is expected to sell more Treasury bills and bonds—beyond its programmed domestic borrowing for the year—to make up for the shortfall in tax collection in the first half.

This was the projection made by the University of Asia & the Pacific and First Metro Investment Corp., which said that, while tax collection could improve in the second half, it might not be enough to compensate for the shortfall in the first six months.

Under the government's 2007 fiscal program, it was supposed to issue P208 billion worth of T-bills and bonds to the domestic capital market to raise cash to plug the budget deficit and pay off maturing obligations.

But as of the first three quarters, they noted, the government has already issued P201 billion worth of government securities to the domestic capital market. Last week, the government also began issuing Retail Treasury Bonds (RTBs) and, according to some estimates, demand for RTBs could reach as high as P40 billion when the offering period ends on July 31.

"The national government may be expecting too much from the two major tax collecting agencies (the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs) when, in fact, the continued peso appreciation can account for a good part of the shortfall," UA&P and FMIC capital markets research center said in its quarterly publication "The Market Call."

Although the lower-than-target revenue generated in the first half was largely blamed on weak tax administration, UA&P and FMIC said the appreciation of the peso also contributed to the anemic collections.

A rise in the peso results in lower collection of import duties. The Bureau of Customs said it loses P2.2 billion in potential collection for every unit appreciation of the peso. The peso now hovers in the 45-to-the-dollar territory, stronger than the 47 to 49 assumed when the government crafted its fiscal program for the year.

The BIR collected P334.7 billion in the first half, lower than its P373.3-billion target for the period. The BIR was given the goal of collecting P765.8 billion for the entire year, although latest estimates show that, at best, it could only collect P741.3 billion.

The BOC collected P99.2 billion from January to June, falling short of its target of P105.3 billion for the period. It is officially tasked to collect P228.2 billion for the year, but government estimates said it was likely to turn in only P223.1 billion.

"While we expect continuing improvements in BIR collections, especially starting September, their shortfall is too large for them to make up in the remaining months," they said.

To make up for the shortfall in tax collection, UA&P and FMIC said, the government might be forced to borrow more from the domestic capital market to meet all its expenditure requirements.

They said the government's need to borrow more from the domestic capital market comes with the rise in interest rates. UA&P and FMIC noted that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has opened a facility in May that entice banks to place more of their funds as deposits to the central bank rather than invest in government securities.

In a move to mop up excess liquidity in the system, the BSP in May started to allow trust department of banks to directly deposit to the central bank, and encouraged more state-owned firms to do the same. The interest rates offered by the BSP are higher than the rates of government securities of comparable tenors.

Keeping bird flu off Philippine shores

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIzation has listed the Philippines as the lone country in Southeast Asia that has been spared from the deadly avian flu.

And the Zuellig Foundation, the corporate responsibility arm of the pharmaceutical giant Zuellig group of companies, wants to make sure that the Philippines stays that way.

Thus, Zuellig launched its Avian Flu Project in late 2005 to help the government in its campaign to keep the Philippines free from the H5N1 avian flu virus strain.

This is on top of Zuellig Pharma's donation of laboratory testing equipment to the Department of Health's Research Institute of Tropical Medicine, which determines the presence of the H5N1 strain in poultry and humans.

Under the Avian Flu Project, Zuellig goes around different corporations and institutions to inform them of the nature of avian flu, teaching them how to prevent employees from contracting the virus and encouraging them to prepare a contingency plan to keep operations going in case of a pandemic.

CORPORATE CITIZEN

Zuellig program manager Dr. Jose Miguel B. Curameng tells the INQUIRER that having a contingency plan is important, especially with key industries such as telecommunications, power, banking and finance and pharmaceuticals.

Especially at risk are companies with poultry operations such as San Miguel Corp., RFM Corp. and Vitarich Corp.

Curameng says the contingency plan will ensure that companies in these industries will be able to provide the same quality service in case a bird flu pandemic does occur in the Philippines.

Groups that have already taken part in the information drive include the Lopez group of companies, Coca-Cola Export Corp., League of Corporate Foundations, Philippine Business for Social Progress, the Philippine IATA Travel Agents Association, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines and the Corporate Coalition Against Bird Flu.

Cases of people dying of bird flu in recent months may be few and far between, but Curameng says this is no reason to be complacent because the virus is still around, possibly mutating into a more deadly strain.

Zuellig, the Department of Health and other concerned institutions are doing everything they can to keep the virus away because, according to the WHO, three of five people who contract the H5N1 virus die.

Some 192 countries across the globe—from Egypt and Azerbaijan to Vietnam—have so far succumbed to avian flu starting 2003 when cases were first reported. And the number is still going up.

According to Zuellig data, people stricken with avian flu suffer from high, sustained fever, headache, difficulty in breathing, muscle and joint pains, sore throat and diarrhea or vomiting. People die from it because it attacks a person's immune system and shuts down the respiratory system.

The H5N1 virus is transmitted to humans through close contact with infected birds and the flapping of wings hastens transmission. The virus is also transmitted through bird feces which, when dried, can be pulverized and easily inhaled.

At risk are poultry handlers, sellers of chicken meat, ornithologists, cullers, those living near poultry farms and other individuals who come in close contact with infected birds.

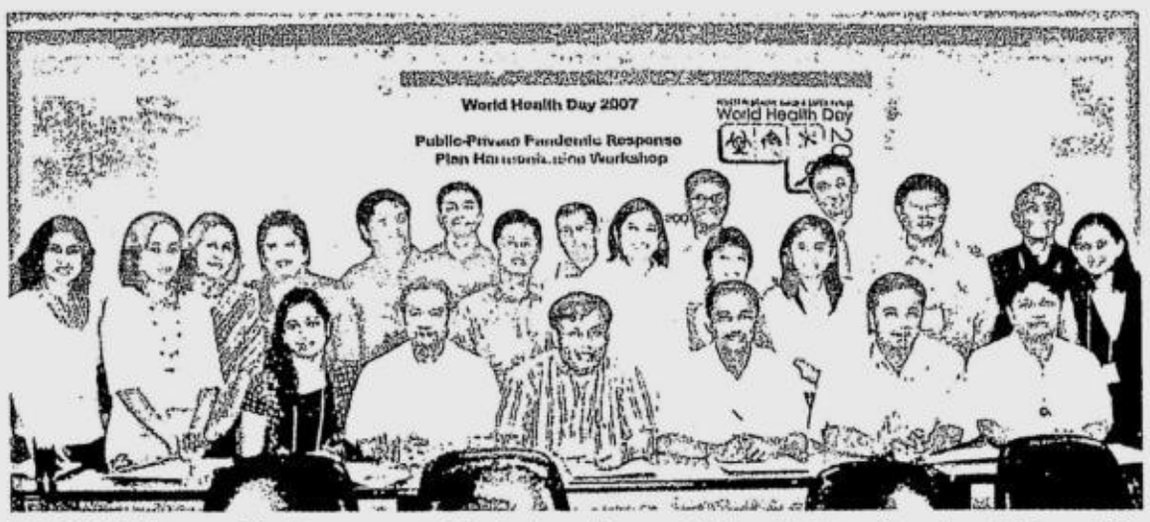
There are also economic reasons why the Philippines should be kept free from bird flu.

According to Zuellig, the avian flu pandemic has already resulted in $8 to $12 billion in losses . Over 150 million birds have been culled or died due to the H5N1 virus.

Zuellig estimates that a modest pandemic lasting a year could lead to losses equivalent to as much as 3 percent of Asia's Gross Domestic Product, and 0.5 percent of the world GDP because of the effect on the poultry industry, human productivity and loss of lives.

That the Philippines has so far been isolated from the pandemic affecting other countries is proof that the Avian Flu project is bearing fruit, Curameng says, but it still pays to be prepared.

In this case, prevention is truly worth more than the cure.



DR. MINNIE Lopez of the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Animal Industry (standing, 4th from left), joins members of the Zuellig Foundation as well as representatives of telecommunications, water, power, banking and pharmaceutical firms in a workshop held on World Health Day last April.

Subsidies to GOCCs hit ₱10B in first half

STATE SUBSIDIES TO GOVERNment-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) and government financial institutions (GFIs) hit over P10 billion in the first half, breaching the full-year ceiling set by fiscal authorities.

Data from the Department of Finance showed that subsidies to state-owned firms reached P10.58 billion in January to June, over three times higher than the P3.17 billion programmed for the period.

The subsidies have already breached the full-year limit, which was officially set at only P4.89 billion, and represented a 55-percent increase from the P6.82 billion recorded in the first half of last year.

The amount of subsidies defeated the aim of reducing the financial dependence of GOCCs and GFIs to the national government, which is trying to put its fiscal house in order by balancing its budget by next year.

Subsidies are provided by the national government to state-owned firms that need extra liquidity to ensure smooth operations.

Records showed that the biggest recipients of subsidies from the national government were: The National Housing Authority, with P2.213 billion; Philippine Health Insurance Corp., P2.048 billion; Technical Livelihood Resource Center, P1.368 billion; Land Bank of the Philippines, P1.286 billion; and Philippine National Railways, P926 million.

A finance official said subsidies granted to LandBank were used to fund the government's comprehensive agrarian reform program (CARP). LandBank serves as the agency that facilitates the distribution of funds for the CARP, the official said.

Although the increase in subsidies reflected the GOCCs and GFIs reliance on the national government, the source added that the reenactment of the national budget last year also had partly to do with the increase in subsidies this year.

Because Congress failed to approve a higher budget for 2006, the government was forced to operate using a budget amounting the same as that of 2005.

The reenacted budget meant that the money the government spent last year to subsidize GOCCs and GFIs did not change from that of the previous year. The government, therefore, was not able to accommodate the increase in financial requirements by state-owned firms last year, and therefore had to compensate that by providing higher subsidies this year.

State-owned firms have been asked to improve their financial performance especially because the government is still in the process of balancing its budget. The government has set a goal of posting a balanced budget by 2008, both by increasing revenue collection and prudent spending.

The DOF earlier reported that the consolidated public sector fiscal position posted a budget surplus of P8.35 billion in the first quarter. CPSF is the combined surpluses and deficits of the national government, state-owned firms and local government units.

Michelle V. Remo

E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph
Website: www.inquirer.net/business

BUSINESS Monday

Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

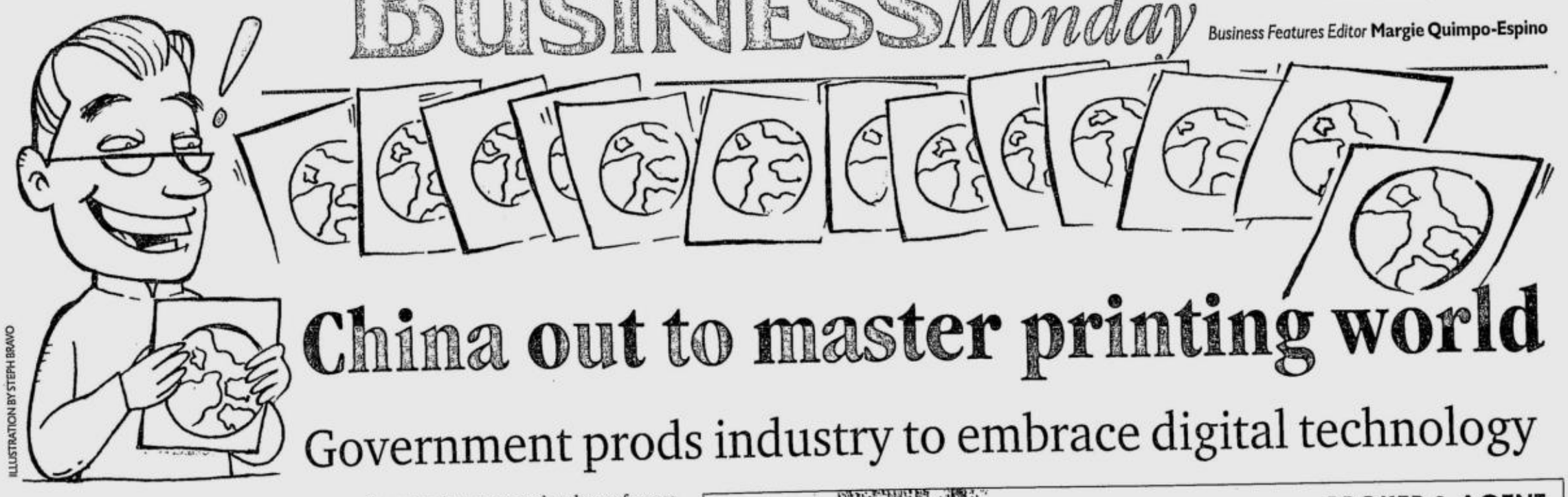


ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

China out to master printing world

Government prods industry to embrace digital technology

By Maricel Almojuela-Tolentino
Contributor

CHINA WILL BE THE PRINTING CENTER OF the world with the latest digital technology.

This was the main message delivered by the General Administration of Press and Publications of the People's Republic of China at the 2nd China CEO Global Graphic Media Conference held recently in Shenzhen City, China.

To do this, the Chinese government encourages its printers to adopt new printing technologies and undergo training to meet international printing standards.

China's printing industry is fast upgrading to digital graphic technologies and systems to further corner the market for export publications on top of its domestic printing requirements.

"China has a very positive macro environment for its graphic industry as a whole, hence, our advantage," said Coco Chen, vice president of the China Association of Printing Technology.

From the data presented at the conference, the Chinese graphic industry enjoys supportive macro policies with tax cuts for procurement of supplies and equipment for technical improvement and is VAT exempt.

The Office of Press and Publications also said the industry contributed 7 percent to China's national gross domestic product (GDP) in 2006.

True enough, the printed materials at the exhibit area showed a diverse mix of publications from different countries all printed in China.

Rapid shift to digital

Chen said that Computer to Plate (CtP) machine installations have increased since September 2006 by 41 percent. She added that digital printing is also enjoying fast growth in China as reflected in some 5,200 digital printing systems acquired by May 2006, mostly by commercial printing companies.

CHINA/ B2-2

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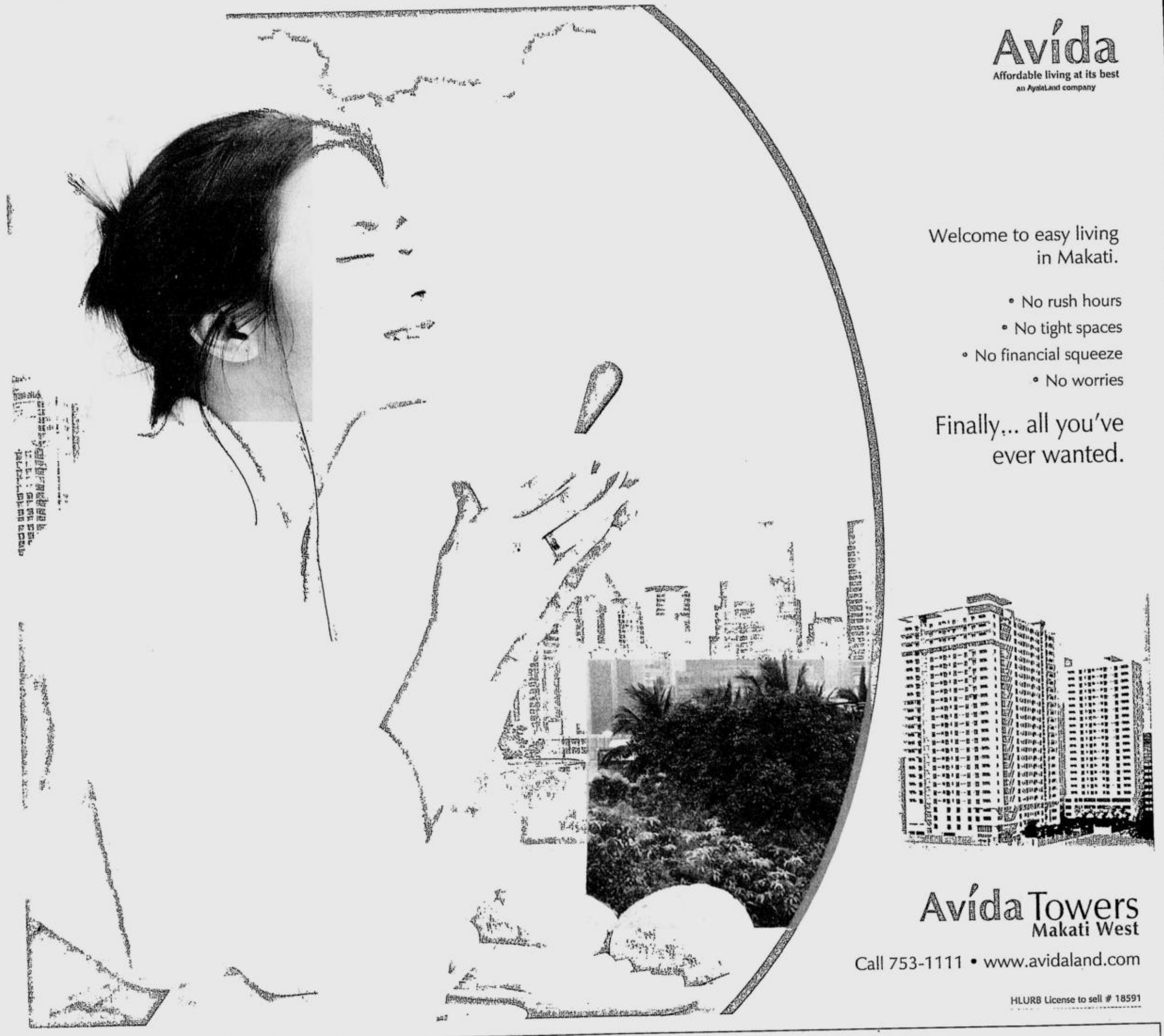

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GOINGS-ON

Top US official sets RP visit

A TOP-RANKING OFFICIAL OF THE US DEpartment of the Interior will visit the Philippines from Aug. 7-12 to promote trade and investment between companies in the Philippines and US territories and affiliated nations in the Pacific.

David Cohen, deputy assistant secretary for insular affairs, will brief senior business executives of Philippine and multinational firms operating in the Philippines on trade and investment opportunities in Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the US Virgin Islands, American Samoa, the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

He will encourage executives to attend a DOI-sponsored conference in October being organized for business executives from these US insular areas and Asian nations.

The conference will take place Oct. 8-9 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Guam. Participation is open to all, and registration is available online at www.islandbusinessopportunities.com.

Pfizer estate attracts firm

PFIZER'S INCUBATOR, a new development that offers scientist-entrepreneurs an opportunity to bring their medical innovations to patients, has attracted its first occupant.

Vaughn Smider MD, PhD, an assistant professor at The Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, California, will work to develop a unique technology to identify antibodies that might lead to new therapies. He will build his new company, Fabrus LLC at the Incubator, located at Pfizer's Research & Development site in La Jolla.

Pfizer will invest $10 million a year to support life science start-ups based in the incubator. Pfizer continues to review research proposals and expects other occupants to move to the facility in the near future.

Ayala breaks 'green' ground

AYALA LAND has formed a partnership with the World Wide Fund for Nature-Philippines (Kabang Kalikasan ng Pilipinas or WWF-Philippines) to provide the property giant with a unique perspective in drafting the blueprint for an eco-friendly, energy efficient community at par with the world's best.

Ayala Land president Jim Ayala said: "We are doing a very holistic approach to this because at the end of the day we are talking about a different way of looking at a project. It's very hard to make that change unless you see it holistically."

Ayala said that part of Ayala Land's fundamentals is to build communities that work properly and flourish over time.

Lorenzo Tan, president of WWF Philippines, said: "The challenge to meet is the requisite of sustainability. Traditionally, developers look at ecological footprint and social equity. Our help comes in terms of bringing technologies experts holding hands as partners to figure out how this could be done best."

Deutsche Bank donates P2M

DEUTSCHE BANK is donating P2 million for the construction of a two-story four-classroom building for the Llano Elementary School in Caloocan City through the SM Foundation Inc.

SM Foundation will represent the donor bank and act as the conduit for the cash donation. It will also supervise and monitor the construction of the building and be responsible for the turnover of the project to the Department of Education.

SM Prime Properties will construct the building which will be provided with complete classroom equipment and toilets and maintain the building annually.

The project is in line with the DepEd's Adopt-A-School Program, which calls on the private sector to assist in upgrading and modernizing the public education system.

Convergys wins award

CONVERGYS CORP., a global leader in providing customer care, human resources, and billing services, has won the 2007 Service Leader Award for outsourcing services from CRM magazine.

This is the third consecutive year the magazine has honored Convergys with this award, which recognizes Convergys' versatile BPO outsourcing services and high customer satisfaction.

"Winning this award for the third consecutive year is a great testament to our employees and the strength of the differentiated value we bring to our clients in our outsourced services," said Clint Streit, Convergys' executive vice president of global customer care operations.

"Companies that choose to outsource or those who operate in-house operations benefit from Convergys' real-world expertise and experience in managing complex customer interactions and relationships."

Soap-making seminar set

THE GOLDEN Treasure Skills and Development Program will conduct a one-day seminar on soap-making at the College of Social Work and Community Development, Magsaysay Avenue corner Ylanan Street, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City on Aug. 4, Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Participants will learn how to make liquid dishwashing soap, liquid hand soap, liquid all-purpose soap, bar detergent soap, herbal bath soap (papaya, kalamansi, cucumber, oatmeal etc.) glycerin (transparent bath soap) and powder soap.

Bonus courses include making liquid bleach, tile and bowl cleaner, fabric softener, car shampoo, air freshener and processing virgin coconut oil for soap.

Participants will receive a certificate of training right after the seminar. For questions, please call 952-40-28; 913-65-51; 436-78-26 and 421-15-77.

Competitiveness and corporate social responsibility

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY assumes greater urgency in our society today as social reformers have keep saying that 20 percent of our people control 80 percent of the nation's wealth, while the rest scramble for shares from the remaining 20 percent.

Under ordinary circumstances, the role of government is to bridge the wide disparity between the few rich and the many poor.

Unfortunately for our people, that gap has widened.

ONE OF the main aims of the business sector is to improve school children's English, Math and Science profiency by 30 percent.

MAPping the Future

Cesar B. Bautista

Competitiveness agenda

It has been widely accepted that the lack of official capabilities to deliver social services, such as education, infrastructure, health, peace and order and other frontline government services, is due to the decline in investor interest in the country over the past several years.

Loss of investors' confidence in the Philippines is a consequence of the decreasing competitiveness of the nation.

Realizing the long-term impact of our eroding competitive edge, we evolved last year a doable National Competitiveness Agenda calculated to reverse the tide.

The DTI and the business chambers, tasked to organize National Competitiveness Summit, went on overdrive in determining the areas to focus on and specific programs that must be done.

During the Summit in October, the President signed EO 571 that created the National Competitiveness Council (NCC), a public-private partnership organization with a core group of five cabinet members and five senior business/private leaders.

NCC's main goal is to implement the six-point competitiveness agenda, aimed at making the Philippines one of the more competitive nations by 2010.

This will be done by the PPP approach with each working group headed by a champion from one of the business chambers and a staff that is supported by the private sector.

Every project is headed by a private sector representative working with a senior public official from the relevant departments.

To my mind, the corporate world is now stepping in where government has been found wanting.

The most influential groups, such as the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP), have dedicated competitiveness committees which work together with the Council in specific working groups, aligning their action programs and heading the action teams.

The same is true for Makati Business Club, Philexport, Employers Confederation, Philippine Business for Social Progress, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry and many others.

NCC is cochaired by Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila and by myself. Other private sector members are Ambassador Donald Dee of PCCI, Ambassador Roberto Romulo, Dr. Federico Macaranas of AIM and Gil Salazar of PBSP.

NCC has determined the key action points that must be pursued between now and 2010, the metrics for results, the timing involved and the persons responsible.

Allow me to illustrate how the private sector is helping address the six factors of uncompetitiveness with the hope that you can come and join us in this national undertaking.

Human Resource Competence

The projects to improve HR competence are about better basic education and developing an alternative route for vocational-technical training, in line with the strategy of the Department of Education.

The first project group is about focusing on the 30-percent improvement in proficiencies in English, Math and Science by 2010. We are concentrating on mentoring the mentors and on attracting more young people to go into the teaching profession.

The Philippine Business for Education (PBEd) is at the forefront in charting the many moves with DepEd. Other groups, including Mirant, are helping The British Council with Ateneo and UP to offer teachers refresher courses during their school breaks.

PMAP will help craft recruitment policies to enlist more teachers specialized in EMS. And who does not know about the Knowledge Channel of the ABS-CBN Foundation?

The other project is to address the huge 30-percent dropout rate of students during their first four years of schooling. It is brought about mainly by lack of nutrients which makes their learning process such an ordeal. This tragedy is similar to wasting 30 percent of our raw materials during the various processes of our companies. No enterprise will stay in business for long with that kind of wastage. So is a nation similarly threatened with HR bankruptcy.

The PBEd is harnessing civic and other groups nationwide to sponsor honest-to-goodness feeding programs in primary school the whole year round … properly coordinated to spread out the benefits and not to garner the support only in urban centers.

Self-interest or CSR?

We intend to initiate the implementation of quality management systems such as ISO 9001 in those national government offices that have influences on the competitiveness of our enterprises.

This year, there will be three offices that will be certified by the normal ISO agencies. Subsequently, it is expected that a combined government-private team can be trained to perform such certifications. MAP has been defining the areas where different institutions can be tapped for assistance.

At the local level, LGUs will be given guidance to become model cities or municipalities with the use of the modules of the Institute of Corporate Directors and the City Development Strategy that are already accepted by the League of City Mayors.

Transaction flows

Making it easy for foreign business people to go in and out of the country is one of the early wins of the NCC.

At the representation of the BPO companies, the granting of visas to prospective investors such as Indians were made simpler by giving these permits at their port of entry provided they are sponsored by a local business chamber.

Philexport has been the pioneer in reducing red tape in government offices, which slows down the turnaround time of the products that they handle.

Together with DTI, Philexport has started an anti-red tape task force which tried to reduce the costs and the time in transacting with various regulatory agencies.

These efforts have now been taken over by the NCC and the private groups involved have been expanded to include foreign chambers, professional groups and other business organizations.

Cheaper and sufficient energy

Seven of 10 business leaders say that energy is our biggest source of uncompetitiveness.

They feel that if the NCC will just focus on the subject of energy, the Philippines will surely move up in the competitiveness rankings.

This field is fraught with the allegations of monopolies, unchecked wastages, government corruption, rent seekers and regulatory competence. Many private groups are active in giving support to shaping up the power industry, especially PCCI, AmCham, FPI and the industrial zone locators.

More financing to MSMEs

Everyone agrees that MSMEs have to be competitive since they serve the needs of the bigger enterprises as well as expand the nation's economic base. However, the current situation is still not good enough to bridge the financing gaps for this sector.

Outside of a few success stories such as the Planters Development Bank, the microfinance models of Opportunity Intl., etc., we still have to see a working model which can address concerns on a national scale.

The PCCI and Philexport are working with DTI and DBP and some other banks in informing the MSMEs how to access the available funds.

Volunteers are being made available by Ecop and the Philippine Quality Movement to support such enterprises, not only in loan applications but also in building business skills.

Indeed, adequate funds seem to be available; access is the problem.

Alternative banking approaches and policies which are working in India and South America must be studied to see if these can be of interest here.

Improved infrastructure

We proposed the lighting of five feeder airports, with expenses to be advanced with the support of the Philippine airline companies, for credit to future landing charges.

The role of ports, both air and sea, is being studied by a logistics services cluster of businessmen who are into supply chain niches with partners such as China, Japan, Asean, etc.

Gone are the days when these ports are transshipment points since we do not have the size of our competitors such as Singapore, Malaysia, etc.

The roles of such ports are concerned with value-adding activities which calls on the skills of our people.

A pool of experts is studying the domestic shipping networks and the cost components to focus on the source of uncompetitiveness.

CSR is governance

The NCC's goals are modest, perhaps, but they will remain unachievable without the participation of the private sector in the form of either corporate social responsibility or specific business tasks.

Some of us may be doing a socially relevant project such as sponsoring a teacher recognition program in a certain school.

However, it will be so much more effective if such projects are part of a bigger, regional undertaking hand in hand with government where the economies of scale will yield the desired quantum improvements by 2010.

Enterprises that aspire to create sustainable profits for its shareholders are duty-bound to practice CSR since it is the akin to good governance.

Both refer to the obligation of the enterprise to consider the interests of its customers, employees, shareholders, partners (suppliers and sellers), the community where it operates and the natural environment around it.

Indeed, a corporation is valued not only for how it is currently performing but more on the basis of how its future performance and cash flow will look like.

Route to competitiveness

In a way, it is not surprising if the top 1,000 corporations in the Philippines can easily get ISO certifications to show they are at par with the best in the world.

They have the wherewithal to recruit and train the best workers they need even if they are operating in the middle of a desert.

They are also aware that they have to extend their influence beyond their operations if they want to ensure their competitive positions.

The real victims of uncompetitiveness are the smaller enterprises, the poorly trained workers/graduates, the low-income group, those dependent on nature and the environment, in other words, more than 80 percent of the Filipinos.

We have many great companies that will help recapture the competitiveness of the nation for the benefit of the majority.

Unfortunately, there are also quite a number who do not hesitate to throw their waste to the streams, or cut down trees from the mountains, or treat their labor shabbily, for the sake of short-term profits.

These are our brothers that we need to convince toward the direction of more CSR.

The opportunities are many for CSR to be used in laying down the pillars of a competitive nation, our nation.

We have illustrated how MAP, MBC, PCCI and other organizations and foundations can align their many activities to become part of the thrusts of the Competitiveness Council.

We will be quite pleased to discuss possibilities in drawing your members to take ownership of specific projects that will be aligned with relevant public offices.

Our task is to execute the projects not by ourselves but through a strong network of people like yourselves working with government, nongovernment and development groups so that our efforts at competitiveness building shall be undertaken as a national endeavor.

It is said that we are a great people. *Magaling ang Pinoy*. Working as a national team, we can still build a great Philippines.

(This is a condensed version of the speech delivered by the author during the MAP-MBC-LCF General Membership Meeting. The author is cochair of the National Competitiveness Council and Trustee of Institute of Corporate Directors. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph.)

China out to master printing world

From page B2-1

To Chen it is clear that imported technology development has been the growth engine of the Chinese graphic industry. "But we need to develop our own digital technology to lessen costs for our graphic companies," Chen said.

She believes that China should focus more on its research and development so that Chinese machines can assimilate with foreign brands or equal their performance.

At present, R & D in China is low and monopolized by foreign equipment suppliers. A Chinese graphic company needs to spend a lot for upgrades since it must purchase an entire system from foreign companies like Heidelberg, Man Roland, Kodak, Fuji Xerox to name a few.

Training in demand

The government agencies and Chinese associations at the conference stressed the need to develop Chinese printers' skills and knowledge on digital workflows.

Printers are also challenged to adopt energy saving and environment-friendly production models to reduce wastage and pollution, and eliminate health hazards in the industry.

Robert van Weldam, director of the International Graphic Specialists in the Netherlands (Ingrin) Foundation said: "It is no use competing with China in terms of price. But foreign companies can look at how they can complement the need for technical assistance and training to produce better quality printed material as well as the joint development of learning products."

Van Weldam said China wants very much to discard its reputation of producing poor quality products.

"China realizes it could improve its quality according to international standards with the assistance of experts and companies from abroad that have experience in their specific fields," he said.

The Ingrin Foundation now cooperates with the Chinese government and the Chinese printing industry by providing a link to the Intergraf or the World Federation for Graphic Employers for training and technical assistance for companies and graphic schools.

It also works with a Chinese company in developing scan-read technology which combines paper, barcode and audio for limitless applications in education and information sharing.

Challenge to local printers

Are Filipino printers ready for China's plan and the onslaught of digital technologies?

Rolando Rocha of Rocha's Printing said China must be viewed as an example and a challenge for the Philippine Printing Industry.

"The secret ingredient to China's dominance of the printing market is the harmonious cooperation between the government and the printing industry. To be globally competitive, the Chinese government created an environment where foreign investments and technical know-how flowed into the country," shared Rocha.

Hoping for support

He hopes that the Philippine government will also extend such support to the local printing industry such as tax holidays for paper and equipment importation.

Rocha, who is also the first vice president of the Philippine Printing Technical Foundation (PPTF) further said, "Filipino printers should also work at increasing competitiveness with their print quality through technical upgrading and maintaining our edge with innovative and attractive designs."

The conference was attended by almost 500 delegates from China, the United States, Japan, Hong Kong, Germany, the Philippines, Vietnam, Singapore, Africa and Europe.

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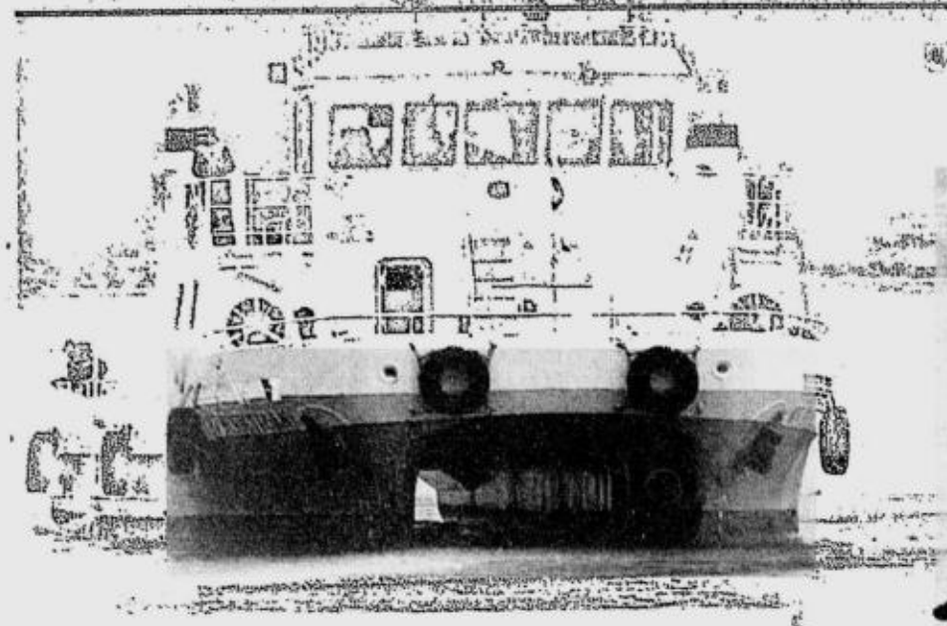

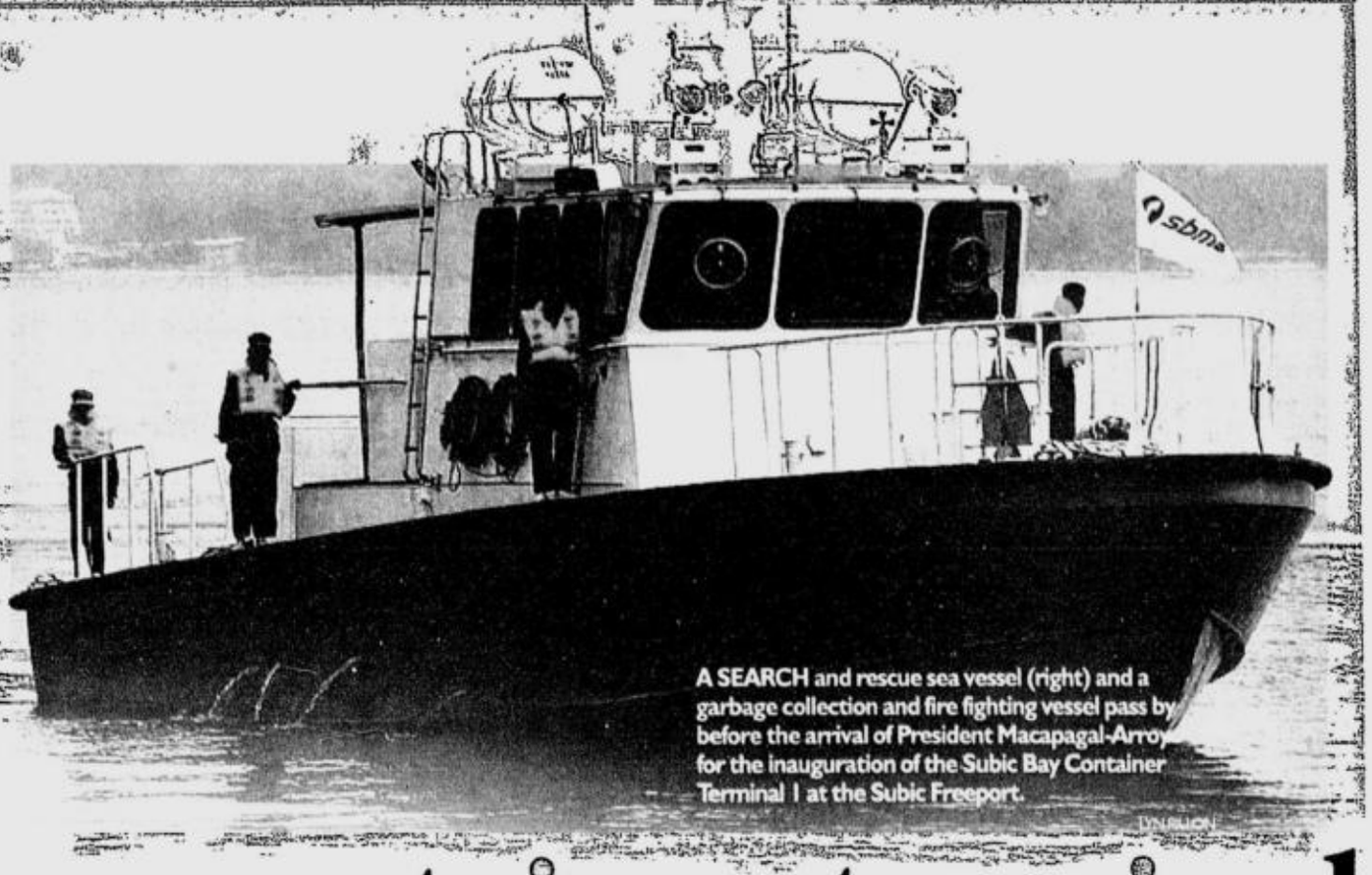

A SEARCH and rescue sea vessel (right) and a garbage collection and fire fighting vessel pass by before the arrival of President Macapagal-Arroyo for the inauguration of the Subic Bay Container Terminal 1 at the Subic Freeport.

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New container terminal in Subic a success story

Subic and Clark are touted as region's most competitive logistics centers

By Ansbert Joaquin and Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—FROM a beach where American servicemen frolicked during the heydays of the Subic Bay Naval Base here, Cubi Point is now the site of a world class port to complement the development of this freeport and the rest of Central Luzon.

Last week, President Macapagal-Arroyo inaugurated the first phase of the $215-million Subic Bay port development project here.

The completion of the New Container Terminal-1 (NCT-1), built on a 29.2-hectare reclaimed area at Cubi Point, is part of the development of Subic Bay and Clark freeport zones as the most competitive international service and logistics centers in the Asia-Pacific region.

The project is co-funded by the Japanese government through the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC).

New gateway

Japanese Ambassador Ryuichiro Yamazaki said Subic, Clark and other areas have found "a new gateway for future growth" with the opening of the container terminal.

"It is also expected to meet the growing demand for Subic and Clark as well as avoiding traffic burden in Manila where more than 80 percent of the country's cargo is presently concentrated," Yamazaki said.

"This is another success story of the ever deeply comprehensive partnership between our two countries and peoples," Yamazaki told Ms Arroyo during the inauguration program.

"As if my own child reached adulthood," Yamazaki said of the project's completion.

Japan funded the project with a P16.3-billion loan.

The project includes the installation of four gantry cranes from Japan, two of which were installed in May last year and the other two in March.

"The entire port modernization project, which is being implemented under the auspices of the JBIC, was designed to make Subic seaport a major container port in the country," said Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Chair Feliciano Salonga.

"Today is a day of great import," he said.

Salonga added that the terminal was in fulfillment of Ms Arroyo's vision to make Subic and Clark the country's best logistics hub.

SBMA Administrator Armand Arreza said the terminal has drawn tobacco giant Philip Morris to set up a warehouse here.

Master plan

"We bested Singapore and Malaysia," he said, attributing that to the trade missions by Sen. Richard Gordon, the first and longest-serving SBMA chair and president from 1992 to 1998.

The alliance between Subic and Clark is part of the long-term master plan that will see the construction of the $415-million Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEx). Both the NCT-1 and the SCTEx are funded by the JBIC.

The terminal will not only serve the freeport's investors, SBMA officials said.

Salonga earlier said the project's cargo market includes Clark freeport in Pampanga and Tarlac, Luisita Industrial Park in Tarlac City and other export processing zones in Central and Northern Luzon.

It will also service Metro Manila-based exporters and importers to reduce the traffic in the country's capital and serve as transshipment within Southeast Asia.

The natural deep harbor and accessibility to shipping traffic in the region are the major advantages of this freeport, Salonga said.

Arreza said a new 3.1-km road is being built to link the new container terminals to the existing Argaunaut Highway and, eventually, to the SCTEx.

The access road, Arreza said, is scheduled to be completed by the end of September this year.

The newly acquired goose neck type quay gantry cranes, with a capacity of 40.6 tons rated load each, is also part of a bigger plan of the government for the Subic port to enhance its capacity from the present 100,000 TEUs (container capacity measured in 20-foot equivalent units or TEU) to at least 600,000 TEUs.

Better position

Also included in the package are the construction of the modern container terminals, and two berths, measuring 280 meters in length, with a depth of 13 meters.

"With a combined handling capacity six times its original port facilities (at 600,000 TEUs), Subic is in a better position to attract more containerized cargo in the East Asia Pacific region," Arreza said.

"[After this], we expect our existing locators to expand their container movements and new locators to come in," he said.

Investments

Arreza said investments in Subic, as of June, reached $1.38 billion, surpassing the record that the SBMA set last year during the same period.

The operation of the NCT-1 will be awarded to global port operator Subic Bay International Terminal Corp. (SBITC), a joint venture company between SBMA (15 percent) and Subic Bay International Terminal Holdings Inc., (85 percent).

SBITHI, on the other hand, is a joint venture between the International Container Terminal Services Inc (ICTSI) and Royal Port Services Inc. with the former owning 83.33 percent.

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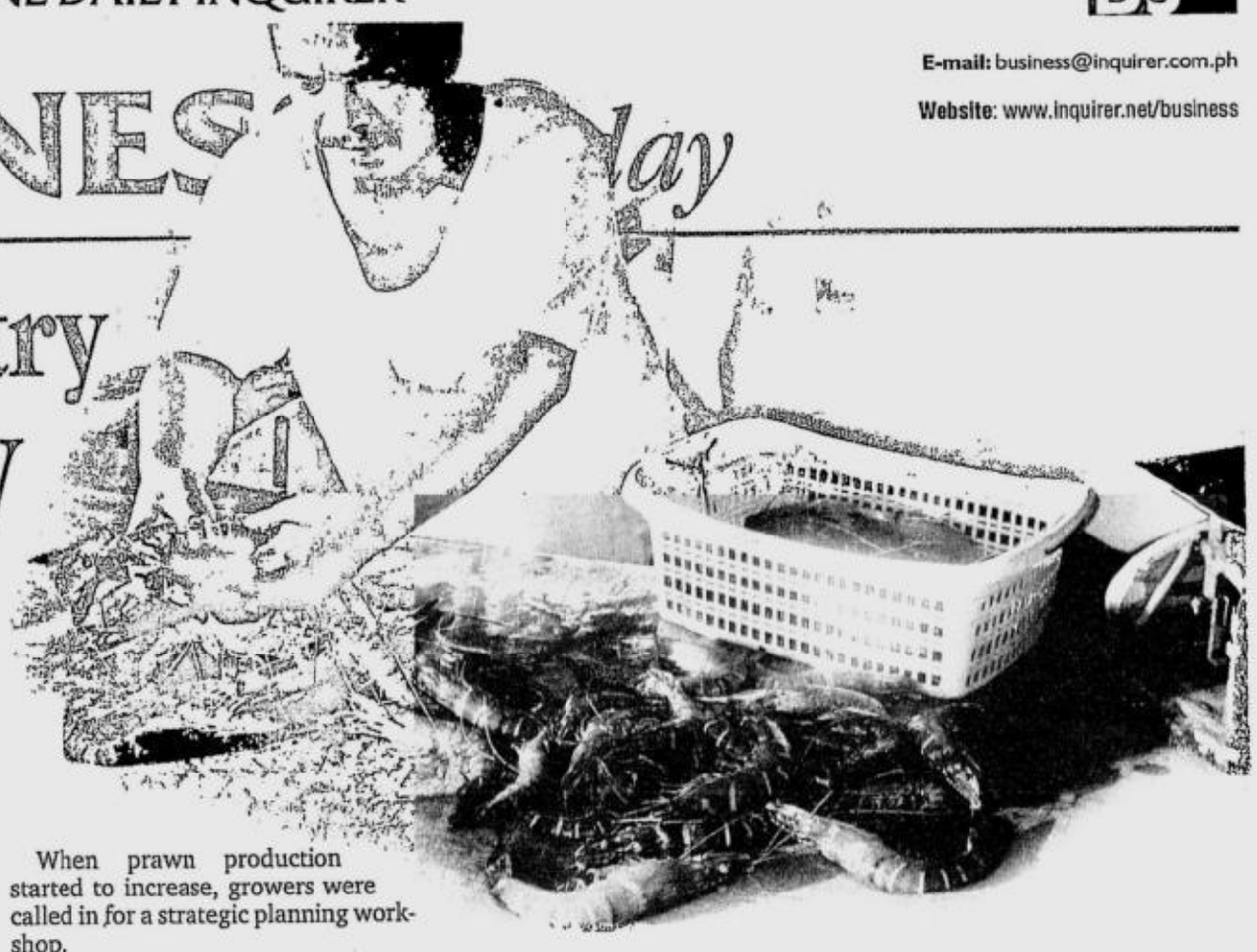
BUSINESS Day

Bislig's prawn industry no longer small fry



FRESH prawns from the fishponds of cooperative members in Bislig City are being sorted according to size.

Text and photos by Chris Panganiban
Inquirer Mindanao

BISLIG CITY—NENE VELASQUEZ, A SMALL fishpond operator and buyer of prawns at the public market here, used to deal with loan sharks whenever she ran out of cash to finance her business.

But since becoming a member of the United Hilibis Fishpond Operators Multi-Purpose Cooperative (Unihfomco), Velasquez stopped relying on "5-6," a term used for loan sharks, because she can easily get cash from her group if she needs it.

Like her, the other cooperative members involved in the prawn business are thriving—thanks to Canadian expert Brian Ives, who spent a month or two in 2005 teaching them the right methods to increase their yield.

Changing lives

Ives is part of the Canadian Executive Service Organization-Business Advisory Project (CESO-BAP) under the Canadian International Development Assistance, which helps small and medium enterprises develop through proper management and new technologies.

Aside from changing their lives, Unihfomco is also helping non-members in some other ways, according to Velasquez.

The loan sharks were forced to lower the interest they charge the other small vendors because of the cooperative.

But that's another story.

Dramatic increase

Velasquez said the technology Ives taught to cooperative members had dramatically increased prawn production. A member who used to get only 200 kilos of prawns per hectare of fishpond now regularly harvests 800 kilos.

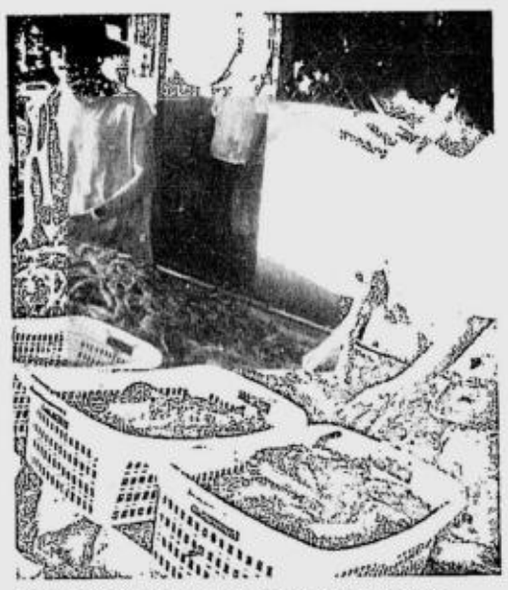
The Canadian expert introduced technologies such as water and soil analysis of ponds during the preparation stage, and the use of indigenous materials like sea shells instead of commercial inputs in feeding the prawns.

CESO-BAP technical advisers have earlier found that the absence of a laboratory had driven most prawn growers to resort to trial and error to identify a good fry.

Most of the time, their production failed as fries survived only for a month or two.

The presence of Ives also opened the eyes of the city government to address the other needs of the industry, and led to the establishment of soil and water analysis and testing laboratory.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) also donated laboratory equipment so the tests could be made here, unlike before when pond owners had to endure a five-hour travel to Butuan City.



UNIHFOMCO members produce 500 to 1,000 kilograms of prawn a day

When prawn production started to increase, growers were called in for a strategic planning workshop.

At the workshop, cooperative members, whose number increased to 30 from the original 11, learned more about the need for better quality of fries, improved technology on production and post harvest, strengthening their group, good financial management and better marketing linkages.

Oversupply

Lothgarda Dionisio, Unihfomco chair, said the cooperative has been cashing in on the increased production.

Dionisio said the cooperative can supply an average of 500 to 1,000 kilograms of prawns a day to the Davao City market alone.

These are sold at between P150 and P350 a kilogram depending on the size and quality.

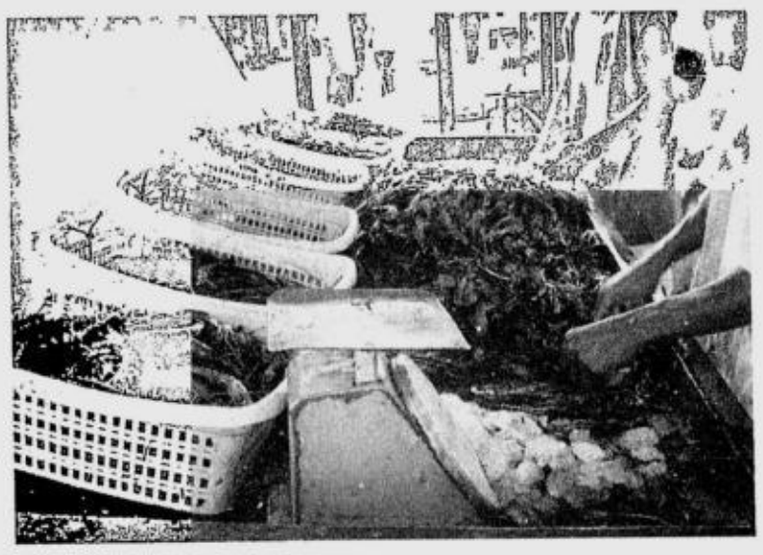
The prospects of exporting quality tiger prawns are also bright since fishermen are fast improving their catch to an average of 240 kilos a day from 80 kilos a day, Dionisio said.

The prawns for export, mostly taken from fish pens on Bislig Bay, are sold at P700 a kilo to a processing plant in Butuan City.

Aside from helping prawn growers, the cooperative has extended a helping hand to the local fishermen who have recently joined the group.

The success of Unifohmco has encouraged Mayor Alberto Tan to allocate P4 million for the establishment of a building near the city hall to house a laboratory and diagnostics center for the fisheries industry.

Aprodecio Alba Jr., city planning officer, said the city government wanted to further develop the fish industry as an alternative source of livelihood for residents.



PRAWNS sell for between P150 and P350 a kilogram depending on the size.

SWUP Seals the Deal

PLDT Showcases Solutions to PFA

At the 15th Philippine International Franchise Conference of the Philippine Franchise Association (PFA) at the Dusit Hotel Makati, PLDT demonstrated the most dramatic improvements in business transactions using, of all things, an actual pizza delivery complete with motorcycle and driver.

As the Shakey's motorcycle puttered right down the aisle in front of a surprised audience, PLDT Corporate Solutions Development Manager, Nico Alcoseba whipped out his own credit card, ready to pay for his specially ordered Grand Slam.

What was different about this motor delivery, aside from the fact that it was right inside a major hotel ballroom, was the fact that Alcoseba was able to swipe his card on the Shakey's Shops. Work UnPlugged (SWUP) enabled wireless terminal to instantly process the transaction.

"In my hand are the three receipts you get with every usual card transaction," he announced to PFA members, "including one for the merchant and one for the customer." He showed the receipts to all in the room after the SWUP terminal wirelessly processed the sale.

Earlier on, PLDT CBG Senior Vice President Eric R. Alberto had stated that "the relevance of cash as an exchange medium for day-to-day transactions is being challenged by the torrent of new technologies gaining mainstream acceptance worldwide." One of these is the exciting PLDT SWUP.

While cash had been king for so many years, according to Alberto the benefits of going cashless now start to outweigh holding on to it or relying on it for transactions. Common "cash pitfalls" to consumers and merchants alike include inconvenience (in handling and management) and risk (theft or counterfeiting).

From a larger perspective, Alberto, who also has extensive experience in the banking sector, pointed out that credit and debit card use by consumers maximizes their cash flow while optimizing and increasing sales for merchants. "Cashless transactions stimulate consumer spending and capital investments, which affect the long-term and sustainable growth of any economy," he said.

Alberto also views SMART Money as one of the key enablers of a cashless economy. Accepted in over 50,000 Mastercard terminals locally and in over 210 countries all over the world, "SMART Money is beyond your vanilla ATM or credit card...(cardholders can) reload airtime to SMART SIMs in 20 Mobile Banking partner-bank institutions, and withdraw from close to 6,000 Expressnet, Bancnet, and Megalink ATMs nationwide. ...transactions are convenient, completed right on SMART mobile phones, ... (and) you can also send and receive money through SMART Padala and SMART Remit."

PLDT SVP and Head of Corporate Business Group Eric Alberto receives a plaque of appreciation from PFA represented by PFA & Max's Restaurant President Robert Trota and PFA Past President & Manels Chairman Manuel Siggaoat.

PLDT Booth at The Franchise Expo held at the World Trade Center in Roxas Blvd.

Guest of honor, DOT Secretary, Joseph Ace Durano (2nd from right), opens the PFA exhibition held at the World Trade Center. Shown with him in this picture from L-R: PCCI Chairman Ambassador Donald Dee, PFA & Max's Restaurant President Robert Trota, Department of Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano and PFA Chairman, Emeritus & PCCI President Samie Lim.

PFA Past President & Manels Chairman Manuel Siggaoat, Motivational Speaker & Funworks Inc. President Francis Kong, PLDT SVP and Head of Corporate Business Group Eric Alberto, PFA & Max's Restaurant President Robert Trota and PLDT FVP & Corporate Business Operations Officer Cesar Enriquez.

SWUP is the Deal Maker

Some notable PFA luminaries who witnessed the demonstration stressed that wireless payments could pave the way to faster and more efficient transactions. One respected PFA member said that more sales closures are possible during client calls, as sales people get more than mere verbal agreements but actual down payments thanks to wireless POS (Point of Sale) machines. At crucial moments of the sales process, SWUP seals the deal right there and then.

PFA Chairman & Global Franchise Marketing President Bing Limjoco, PLDT FVP and Head of Corporate Business Solutions Nerisse Ramos, Asia Pacific Franchise Confederation Chairman Dato Mukhriz Mahathir and PFA Chairman, Emeritus & PCCI President Samie Lim.

PLDT Corporate Solutions Development Manager Nico Alcoseba demonstrates the power of SWUP to Manuel Siggaoat with on the spot payment of his Shakey's pizza.

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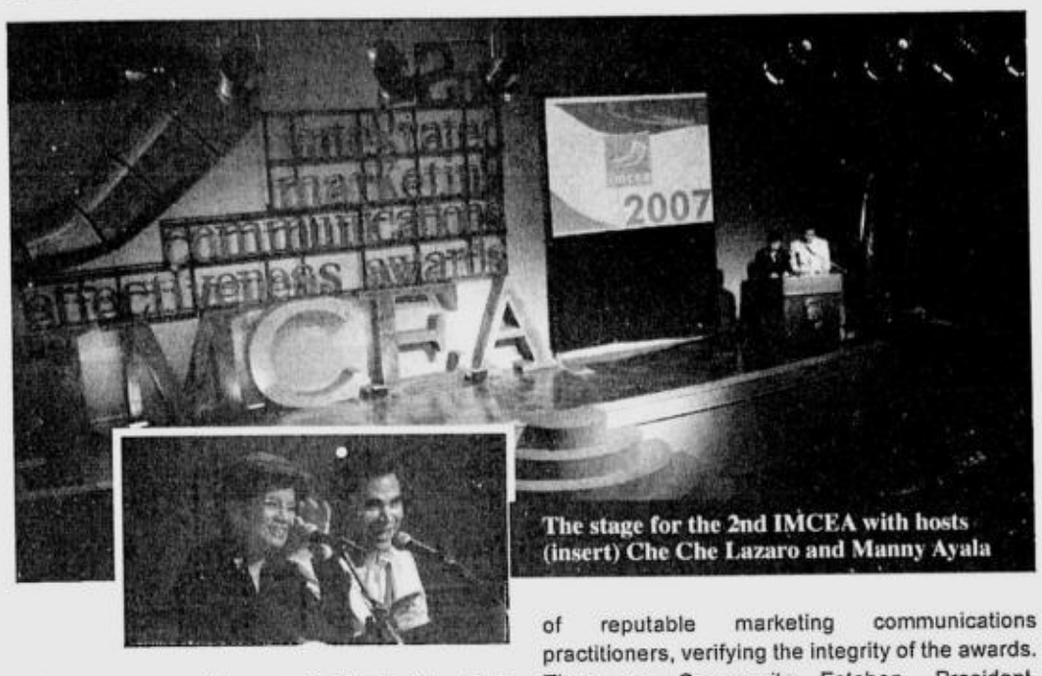
The 2ND Integrated Marketing Communications Effectiveness Awards

The 2nd Integrated Marketing Communications Effectiveness Awards (IMCEA), a celebration of excellence in marketing communications, is a great opportunity to honor remarkable contributions to the advertising practice in the country. The people and organizations behind effective marketing communications campaigns are given due recognition for their deliberate efforts to promote universal values among Filipinos.



The stage for the 2nd IMCEA with hosts (insert) Che Che Lazaro and Manny Ayala

"We are specially proud of the entries that we received this year because all our finalists did a wonderful job. But of course, tonight, we are giving recognition only to those whose campaigns stood out despite stiff competition," Mr. JJ Calero, Chairman of the IMCEA Advisory Board, said.

The IMCEA is the first and only award in the Philippines that defines "effectiveness" on two levels: **notable business results** and **promotion of societal values**. Being so, it has set a new standard of effectiveness among Filipino marketing communications practitioners. It is different from other existing industry awards that are focused solely on creativity, values or the various aspects of the advertising agency business. Participants submitted their entries in a case study format where they detailed how their campaigns contributed to their client's bottom line while promoting societal values at the same time. Furthermore, they submitted audited sales figures to verify the commercial effectiveness of their campaigns.

An initiative of the University of Asia and the Pacific's (UA&P) School of Communication, the IMCEA is aimed at promoting accountability and underlining the importance of corporate social responsibility and ethics among corporations in the country. "IMCEA entries are submitted by advertising agencies in coordination with their clients. This way, we are encouraging both agency and client to be more involved in building a nation where citizens live meaningful lives because people have high regard for ethics and values. By being able to come up with campaigns that correspond to our definition of "effectiveness", they are reassured that they can do something positive to benefit the community without compromising profitability," Dr Jerry Kliatchko, UA&P's VP for Academic Affairs and Corporate Communications said.

The IMCEA Advisory Board, headed by advertising veteran JJ Calero, is composed of reputable marketing communications practitioners, verifying the integrity of the awards. They are Carmencita Esteban, President, Philippine Survey and Research Center-Research International (PSRC-RI); Herminio Ordoñez, Chairman Emeritus of Publicis Manila; Eric Canoy, President, Radio Mindanao Network; Jaime Puno, Lecturer, UA&P School of Communication and Former Chairman, President and CEO, Dentsu, Young and Rubicam-Alcantara; Ramon Jimenez, CEO, Jimenez BasicAdvertising; Francine Calero-Racho, Dean, School of Communication, UA&P; and Jerry Kliatchko, Vice President, Academic Affairs and Corporate Communications, UA&P.

Equally reputable are the Board of Judges who selected the Bronze, Silver and Gold awardees in the award's nine categories: *Best New Product Brand Introduction, Best New Service Brand Introduction, Best Small Budget Product Brand Campaign, Best Small Budget Service Brand Campaign, Best Established Product Brand Campaign, Best Established Service Brand Campaign, Best Integrated Internal Marketing Program, Best Innovative and Integrated Media Campaign,* and *Best Insights and Strategic Thinking.*

The IMCEA, organized by the UA&P School of Communication, in cooperation with BusinessWorld and Marketing and Opinion Research Society of the Philippines (MORES), is sponsored by the *Manila Broadcasting Company, Millward Brown, AGB Nielsen Media Research, Radio Mindanao Network (RMN),* and *PSRC-Research International* and *ABS-CBN News Channel (ANC).*

The 2nd IMCEA Winners

Gold winner Nestlé Philippines' VP for Corporate Wellness Corazon Sager (fifth from left), with Javier Calero (IMCEA Advisory Board Chairman), Lieza Punsalan (Account Manager, Publicis Manila), Sofia Genato (Account Director, Publicis Manila), Sandra Puno (Media Director, Nestlé Philippines), Matec Villanueva (Chairman & CEO, Publicis Manila), Barbara Locsin (President and CEO, Businessworld), Pedro Dy-Liacco (Communications Director, Nestlé Philippines), Ronald Barreiro (EVP-Client Services Director, Publicis Manila), Patrick Tolentino (Business Unit Director, Publicis Manila) and Dr. Jose Maria Mariano (President, UA&P).

GOLD WINNER

Choose Wellness, Choose Nestlé
BEST INNOVATIVE AND INTEGRATED MEDIA CAMPAIGN
Sponsored by: Radio Mindanao Network
Agency: Publicis Manila
Client: Nestle Philippines

SILVER WINNERS

BPI Get Started on Tomorrow Omnibus Campaign
BEST NEW PRODUCT BRAND INTRODUCTION
Sponsored by: Manila Broadcasting Company
Agency: McCann Worldgroup, Inc.
Client: BPI Family Savings Bank

Petron Xtra Miles Challenge
BEST NEW PRODUCT BRAND INTRODUCTION
Sponsored by: Manila Broadcasting Company
Agency: Ace Saatchi & Saatchi, Studio 5 Designs, Inc.
Client: Petron Corporation

PLDT Wedding Souvenir
BEST NEW PRODUCT BRAND INTRODUCTION
Sponsored by: Manila Broadcasting Company
Agency: DDB Philippines
Client: PLDT

The BPInoy Ad Campaign
BEST NEW SERVICE BRAND INTRODUCTION
Agency: McCann Worldgroup
Client: Bank of the Philippine Islands

Touch Mobile Relaunch
BEST NEW SERVICE BRAND INTRODUCTION
Agency: JimenezBasic Advertising
Client: Innove Communications, Inc.

Coke Planet Project
BEST NEW SERVICE BRAND INTRODUCTION
Agency: McCann Worldgroup-MOMENTUM
Client: Coca-Cola Foundation

Making a Leadershsip Statement with St. Luke's International Eye Institute
BEST NEW SERVICE BRAND INTRODUCTION
Client: St. Luke's MedicalCenter

LBC Instant Peso Padala P39
BEST SMALL BUDGET PRODUCT BRAND CAMPAIGN
Agency: Blackpencil Advertising, Inc.
Client: LBC Express, Inc.

Planters Development Bank: SME Community Phil.
BEST SMALL BUDGET SERVICE BRAND CAMPAIGN
Sponsored by: Millward Brown Asia Pacific-Philippines
Agency: Blue Bottle, Inc.
Client: Planters Development Bank

BPI Get Started on Tomorrow
BEST ESTABLISHED PRODUCT BRAND CAMPAIGN
SPONSORED BY: AGB NIELSEN MEDIA RESEARCH
Agency: McCann Erickson
Client: BPI Family Savings Bank

Alaska Sisters
BEST ESTABLISHED PRODUCT BRAND CAMPAIGN
SPONSORED BY: AGB NIELSEN MEDIA RESEARCH
Agency: Lowe, Inc.
Client: Alaska Milk Corporation

ArtPetron: Alay sa Sining
BEST ESTABLISHED SERVICE BRAND CAMPAIGN
Agency: Studio 5 Designs, Inc.
Client: Petron Corporation

St. Luke's Marketing Leadership Positioning: Bringing Healthcare Quality in the Philippines to International Standards
BEST ESTABLISHED SERVICE BRAND CAMPAIGN
Client: St. Luke's Medical Center

Prudentialife: Buhay ang Pag-asa
BEST ESTABLISHED SERVICE BRAND CAMPAIGN
Agency: Publicis Manila; Banana 3 Productions; MEDIAEDGEcia
Client: Prudentialife

Cebu Pacific: Leadership Campaign
BEST ESTABLISHED SERVICE BRAND CAMPAIGN
Agency: JimenezBasic Advertising
Client: Cebu Pacific Air

Petron's An Hour with the Champions
BEST INTEGRATED INTERNAL MARKETING PROGRAM
Agency: Studio 5 Designs, Inc.
Client: Petron Corporation

Touch Mobile Relaunch
BEST INSIGHTS AND STRATEGIC THINKING
Sponsored by: Philippine Survey and Research Center- Research International
Agency: JimenezBasic Advertising
Client: Innove Communications, Inc.

BPI Expat Pinoys
BEST INNOVATIVE AND INTEGRATED MEDIA CAMPAIGN
Sponsored by: Radio Mindanao Network
Agency: Dentsu Philippines; Image Dimensions
Client: Bank of the Philippine Islands

Petron Xtra Miles Challenge
BEST INNOVATIVE AND INTEGRATED MEDIA CAMPAIGN
Sponsored by: Radio Mindanao Network
Agency: Ace Saatchi & Saatchi; Studio 5 Designs, Inc.
Client: Petron Corporation

Jollibee Bee-2-Win
BEST INNOVATIVE AND INTEGRATED MEDIA CAMPAIGN
Sponsored by: Radio Mindanao Network
Agency: Universal McCann
Client: Jollibee Foods Corporation

BRONZE WINNERS

Lovin' Legaspi
BEST NEW PRODUCT BRAND INTRODUCTION
Sponsored by: Manila Broadcasting Company
Agency: Geiser Maclang Marketing Communications, Inc.
Client: Community Innovations, Inc

McDonald's McRice Burger
BEST NEW PRODUCT BRAND INTRODUCTION
Sponsored by: Manila Broadcasting Company
Agency: Leo Burnett Manila
Client: Golden Arches Development Corporation

Virtuoso Silk Touch
BEST NEW PRODUCT BRAND INTRODUCTION
Sponsored by: Manila Broadcasting Company
Agency: Geiser Maclang Marketing Communications, Inc.
Client: Pacific Paint (Boysen) Philippines, Inc.

Philamlife Milestones
BEST SMALL BUDGET PRODUCT BRAND CAMPAIGN
Agency: Rapp Collins, Philippines
Client: Philamlife

Philamlife Money Tree
BEST SMALL BUDGET PRODUCT BRAND CAMPAIGN
Agency: Rapp Collins, Philippines
Client: Philamlife

Security Bank Fixed Income Investment Solution 1
BEST SMALL BUDGET PRODUCT BRAND CAMPAIGN
Agency: Ethos Advertising
Client: Security Bank

Astig Revicon Dribbling Challenge
BEST SMALL BUDGET PRODUCT BRAND CAMPAIGN
Agency: JimenezBasic Advertising
Client: Unilab

Security Bank Fixed Income Investment Solution 2
BEST SMALL BUDGET SERVICE BRAND CAMPAIGN
Sponsored by: Millward Brown Asia Pacific-Philippines
Agency: Ethos Advertising
Client: Security Bank

Solmux Eto o Eto Gorilla
BEST ESTABLISHED PRODUCT BRAND CAMPAIGN
Sponsored by: AGB Nielsen Media Research
Agency: JimenezBasic Advertising
Client: Unilab

Prudentialife: Buhay ang Pag-asa
BEST INTEGRATED INTERNAL MARKETING PROGRAM
Agency: Publicis Manila; Banana 3 Productions; MEDIAEDGEcia
Client: Prudentialife

PLDT Wedding Souvenir
BEST INTEGRATED INTERNAL MARKETING PROGRAM
Agency: DDB Philippines
Client: PLDT

Enervon Happy
BEST INSIGHTS AND STRATEGIC THINKING
Sponsored by: Philippine Survey and Research Center- Research International
Agency: Lowe, Inc.
Client: Unilab Consumer Healthcare

PSBank's Thank Goodness It's Five Days
BEST INSIGHTS AND STRATEGIC THINKING
Sponsored by: Philippine Survey and Research Center- Research International
Agency: Publicis Manila
Client: Philippine Savings Bank

Globe sa Piling Mo
BEST INSIGHTS AND STRATEGIC THINKING
Sponsored by: Philippine Survey and Research Center- Research International
Agency: Universal McCann
Client: Globe Telecom

Prudentialife: Buhay ang Pag-asa
BEST INNOVATIVE AND INTEGRATED MEDIA CAMPAIGN
Sponsored by: Radio Mindanao Network
Agency: Publicis Manila; Banana 3 Productions; MEDIAEDGEcia
Client: Prudentialife

PLDT Wedding Souvenir
BEST INNOVATIVE AND INTEGRATED MEDIA CAMPAIGN
Sponsored by: Radio Mindanao Network
Agency: DDB Philippines
Client: PLDT

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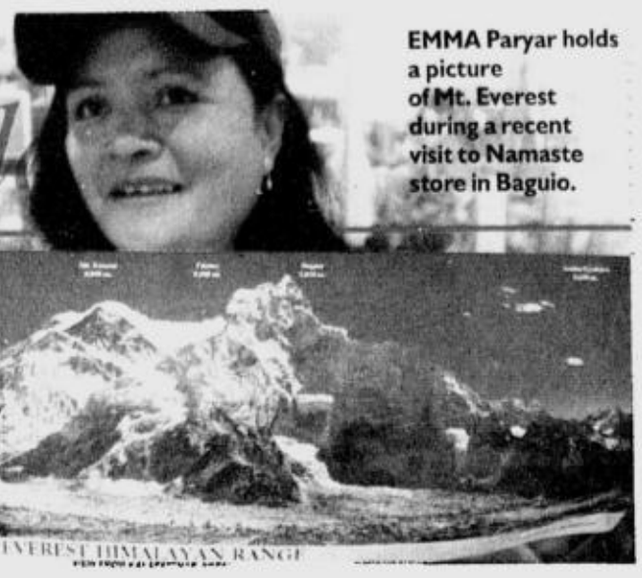

EMMA Paryar holds a picture of Mt. Everest during a recent visit to Namaste store in Baguio.

How to reach the summit of Mt. Everest

Text and photos by Frank Cimatu
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—Many are now familiar with the names Noelle Wenceslao, Carina Dayondon and Janet Belarmino, the first three Filipino women who reached the summit of Mt. Everest last summer.

But does anyone know the fourth?

Emma Paryar is the trekking agent who helped the First Philippine Mt. Everest Expedition (FPMEE) in their booking and lodging. She reached only the base camp at the foot of Mt. Everest, but that is enough for her to claim that she had almost reached the top of the highest mountain in the world.

Emma and husband Harka are trekking agents who help any mountaineering enthusiast climb Mt. Everest.

She said Filipinos who want to go to Mt. Everest must start training now, even if the actual climbing season runs from March to May.

The couple suggested that travelers fly from Manila to Kathmandu in Nepal through Bangkok or Hong Kong. Round-trip airfare costs about $900.

Emma passed through Hong Kong where she met Harka. She was 23 then. The couple has been married for 11 years.

She said the trekking business is booming because more tourists prefer extreme adventures.

The Paryars are connected with the Kathmandu-based International Adventures Treks and Expedition (IATE), which also offers treks in Tibet and Bhutan.

This was helpful for the three Filipino mountaineers whose transborder climb was from Tibet to Nepal.

Together with Thamserku Trekking, IATE organized the FPMEE trips in 2006 and 2007.

Paryar said the recent feats of the FPMEE, including that of Leo Oracion and Erwin "Pastor" Emata, the first two Filipinos to reach the Everest apex, would push more Filipinos to go there.

Most of the Filipino clients are from the United States and Dubai.

During the off season, the Paryars handle Filipinos who do not intend to climb Mt. Everest but go there for a Buddhist pilgrimage. These pilgrims number 900-1,200 a year.

Although she has been a trekking agent for more than a decade, Paryar has not yet reached the top of Mt. Everest, but was excited over the feat of the three women.

"We were so happy when they reached the top," she said, adding that Filipinos could easily go to Mt. Everest as long as they follow the guidelines.

A medical certificate, for instance, is required to show that the climber can bear the altitude starting at 2,000 meters above sea level.

Acclimatization is needed even at the base camp, known as Namtse Bazar or Nagarkot.

Beyond Namtse Bazar, things get much more expensive.

"One has to spend from $4,000 to $10,000 a day for Sherpa guides and porters," Paryar said.

Emata and Oracion saved money by mingling with the Sherpas.

Major car dealers at launch of "MetroCar Great Rates Sale" at Power Plant Mall

EIGHT leading car dealers in Metro Manila put their vehicles on display during the launch of Metrobank's "MetroCar Great Rates Sale" last June 29 to July 1, 2007 at the Power Plant Mall in Rockwell Center, Makati City.

The dealers who showcased their respective brands during the 3-day launch are Honda Cars Pasig, Hyundai Quezon Avenue, Isuzu Inteco Edsa, Kia Greenhills, Mitsubishi Citimotors, Nissan UN Avenue Manila, Toyota Manila Bay, and Ford Global City.

The MetroCar Great Rates Sale offers special rates on the MetroCar Loan for the purchase of any brand new car. The promo will run until September 30, 2007, and is open to all Metrobank depositors and non-depositors who will avail of a MetroCar loan within Metro Manila branches.

"It was a privilege for us to be a part of the MetroCar Great Rates Sale that brings together the industry's leading brands," said Johnas Soriano, Marketing Supervisor of Ford Global City, which took the opportunity to display and highlight one of its newest models, the Ford Escape 4x4 2.3L A/T.

"It was a good venue for the car display," said Soriano, "since Ford caters to the same market as that of Power Plant, Rockwell." Ford Global City offered a free I-Pod Shuffle to all the clients who will reserve a Ford Escape for a minimum cash deposit of P20,000.

Eric Domingo, VP for Sales and Marketing of Hyundai Quezon Avenue, thanked Metrobank for a successful event at the Power Plant. "The guests and shoppers had a feast of different brands all under one roof," said Domingo. "There were a number of credit applications, and the general feedback from the guests is that the rates are very attractive especially when they compare them with other banks'," shared Domingo.

"The 3-day MetroCar Great Rates Sale promo launch was indeed a great success and we're happy to be part of it," enthused Gin Gin Rizarone, Assistant Sales Manager of Toyota Manila Bay, "Our dealership was able to list down more than a hundred inquiries."

Rizarone said it was a unique experience for their sales people. "Because of the number of inquiries we receive everyday during the event, there was even a time they don't eat lunch and snack on time because they didn't want to miss the opportunity of getting a sale," she explained.

"The launch event of the MetroCar Great Rates Sale was a great experience for the bank and its partner dealers," said Metrobank Consumer Lending Group head Rowena Oliveros. "Their sales personnel had a chance to meet prospective clients from our guests, as well as from Rockwell patrons. Car buyers also got the opportunity to avail of the best rates to purchase a car," said Oliveros.

Apart from the competitive rates, borrowers are assured of the other benefits of a MetroCar auto loan such as loan values of up to 80% of a new car's net selling price, an affordable installment plan of up to 60 months, fast processing of loan application, and worry-free loan repayment through issuance of postdated checks or automatic debit arrangements.

Hyundai Quezon Avenue's Domingo echoed the sentiments of dealers who participated in the recent launch. "I hope there are more events like this with Metrobank. And we hope to be part of it again."

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Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

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MOZART'S "The Magic Flute" at the Cultural Center of the Philippines last year; (above) "Hansel and Gretel" provincial outreach shows

Philippine Opera Company keeps the art alive and kicking

Aficionados and lovers champion the form against all odds

By Antonio C. Hila
Contributor

OPERA PRODUCTIONS are an obvious scarcity on the local musical scene.

Among the many musical forms, opera is perhaps the least that is ventured into by companies. One sees operatic production only once in a blue moon.

And yet many of the country's singers have made names on the international operatic scenes from the last century to the present millennium, and had somehow managed to create a vibrant operatic tradition, featuring local as well as foreign talents. This tradition is slowly being eroded, and it would be tragic to see its obliteration.

Keeping opera alive and kicking is the avowed goal of the Philippine Opera Company (POC) that Karla Patricia Gutierrez, a soprano and stage actress, had established. She bewails that classical singers are not afforded the venue for honing their operatic talent.

After graduating with a bachelor's degree in Voice, they do jobs other than sing in the opera. Some teach at a young age, when they should be singing. Others sing in the choir, or make a quick detour to pop singing, much more, backup singing and the like.

Even in college, the need of putting up an opera company is acutely felt. At times, it becomes ridiculous to know students major in Voice just to be able to join a prestigious choral group, which does not even specialize in operatic choruses.

This is not to say, however, that local conservatories are totally indifferent to the idea of mounting an opera. They do mount operas in their respective schools and at times mount them outside. It would have made a difference if productions are done more regularly and well-attended at that.

On the professional side, an opera company has yet to be listed on the Cultural Center of the Philippines' roster of resident companies.

Last year, the University of Santo Tomas Conservatory of Music had made itself felt with its successful Philippine premiere of Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin" backed with a budget in the millions, proving that staging an opera can be done, counting the support of a university as well as local talents in the entire production.

Burning belief

Indeed, it is her burning belief in Filipino classical singers plus a most vibrant hope that moved Gutierrez to put up POC, out of the utter realization that the country should have one. This idea materialized from a humbling experienced she had while attending classes at Academi Internationale delle Arti in Rome.

When artists were introduced, including the opera company they were affiliated with, in mounting Humperdinck's "Hansel and Gretel," she had no opera to mention when introduced to essay the role of the Dew Fairy.

Back in Manila, she made a great resolve to put up POC, counting support from her friends and patrons from the business sector.

To date, the POC had mounted chamber operas "La Chanson de Carmen," "Hansel and Gretel," and children's operas "Sid the Serpent Who Wanted to Sing," and the "Toy Shop." The Tony Award-winning play "Master Class" was also mounted successfully. It had gathered the country's operatic talents in "Operanow 1 and 2," which were successfully mounted at the CCP.

Opera appreciation need not be solely addressed to the elite. Music, being the most universal among the arts, is perhaps the most democratic, too. Hence, POC breaks economic walls and readily makes opera accessible to all irrespective of social status.

POC mounts performances in malls, churches, community centers, parks and schools. In fact, with Karla as artistic managing director and performing artist, and with tenor Nolyn Cabahug heading the Education and Outreach section, the company has done outreach performances.

Complementing the company's core group are Karla's mother Zenaida Gutierrez, who takes charge of costume design; and Jo Tecson, in charge of production design.

Starting 'em young

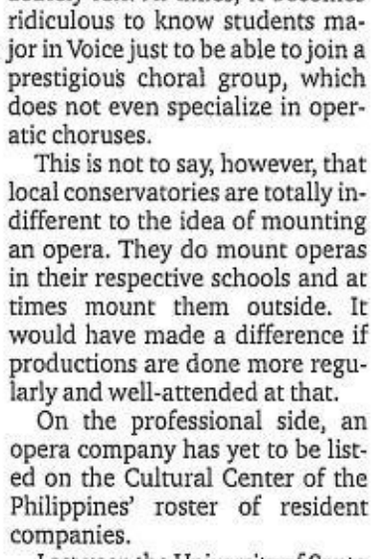
POC also thinks children are not too young to appreciate the classics, much more opera. It believes classical-music appreciation should start with the young. So it launched a program for kids, in which they are given interactive exposure and performances.

These children are taught the basics and transformed into "opera babies," counterpart of the Vienna Boys Choir, who would entice adults to support the opera.

POC also offers lessons in voice, piano, guitar and violin, apart from music and movement for children and pre-teeners.

At the POC office, actually a comely house at 15 Garcia Villa St., San Lorenzo, Makati, turned into an office-studio, opera reigns supreme. The rooms are labeled with opera titles; the background music is operatic; photos of opera composers and singers are hung on the walls; and books on opera hogged the tables.

After a quick tour guided by Zenaida, Karla bared the mounting of Puccini's well-loved opera "La Boheme" at the CCP Main Theater, in collaboration with the CCP in October next year. POC is



KARLA Gutierrez

PHILIPPINE OPERA/ C2

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LUZON: CSI San Fernando La Union Mall - Aug 3-5 - CSI Mall Dagupan - Aug 29-Sept 4 - Paseo Real Mall - Tuguegarao - Sept 7-9 - LCC Mall - Naga - Sept 7-14 - SM Clark - July 30 - Aug 5 - SM Dasmariñas - Aug 11-17
VISAYAS: Lee Plaza Mall - Dumaguete - July 13-15 - BQ Mall - Bohol - July 12-22 - Ormoc Superdome - Aug 3-5 - Real Food Centrum - Tacloban - Aug 14-20 - Ayala Center Cebu - Aug 28-Sept 3 - SM Iloilo - Sept 10 - 16 - SM Bacolod - Sept 24-30
MINDANAO: Gaisano Mall Davao - July 17-23 - Limketkai Mall CDO - July 30-Aug 5 - Valencia City Gym - Aug 24-26 - XCC Mall Gensan - Aug 24-Sept 2 - Southway Square Mall Zamboanga - Aug 31-Sept 2 - Bgy San Miguel MP Hall - Iligan - Sept 7-9 - Medina Gym Ozamis - Sept 14-16
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TRADITION, TRADITION! TRADITION!

So sings Tevye the milkman, over and over, in the opening number of the much-loved Broadway musical "Fiddler on the Roof." He might have been talking about Repertory Philippines, the country's premier theater company, which is currently celebrating an incredible 40 years of tradition. (It will restage "Fiddler on the Roof" in November-December this year.)

Since 1968, Rep has produced hundreds of well-loved plays, musicals and musical revues and, in the process, has helped develop some of the country's best theatrical talent. If Tevye himself were to look back on this rich history, no doubt he'd be impressed that such a proud theatrical tradition could be kept alive for so long.

But for Rep, it's not enough.

This is why Rep continues to move forward, offering a healthy combination of the old and the new, the traditional and the cutting-edge—sometimes within the same show.

Its classic production this year, for example, is a bold new version of Shakespeare's timeless comedy "Love's Labour's Lost," transposed to the University Belt in the free-wheeling '80s. Also on the roster for Repertory Children's Theater is a new musical version of the delightful Disney classic "Cinderella."

And Rep closes this landmark season with "Fiddler on the Roof" as its major production for 2007.

Disney's "Cinderella" for kids opens Aug. 11; William Shakespeare's "Love's Labour's Lost" opens Sept. 15; and "Fiddler on the Roof" opens Nov. 9. All shows will be at Onstage, Greenbelt 1. Call 8870710 or 8919999.

THE 1996 cast of "Love's Labour's Lost"

'Children's Letters to God' makes its Manila debut

DEAR, GOD. WHERE CAN I go to find a musical play for the whole family to enjoy together?"

The answer to this child's prayer goes onstage at the RCBC Theater in Makati this August as Actor's Actors Inc. (AAI) and Great.Events@Manila Inc. jointly present the smash off-Broadway musical "Children's Letters to God."

"Dear, God. Are you really invisible or is that just a trick?" "Dear, God. How come you did all the miracles in the old days and you don't do any now?" These are just some of the hard-hitting questions and tell-it-like-it-is revelations that make up "Children's Letters to God," the new musical inspired by the international best-selling book of the same title. Taken directly from the letters of young people writing to "the Big G," the musical follows the lives of five young friends as they voice beliefs, desires, questions and doubts common to all people but most disarmingly expressed by children. Sixteen tuneful songs and assorted scenes (some based on actual letters) explore timeless issues such as sibling rivalry, divorce, holidays, the loss of a beloved pet, the trials of being unathletic and first love.

This entertaining show carries a universal message, which crosses the boundaries of age, geography and religion. Expressed in letters recited by five talented young actors (ranging from 9-14 years) that are both amusing and heartfelt, they ask questions such as "God, how did you know you were God?" and "God, why do my feet stink?"

This family-friendly, feel-good show is a reflection of all the questions that kids have for the Big Guy. It will make you remember yourself as an inquisitive kid while perhaps bringing a tear to your eye and definitely a smile to your face.

The show has been translated into several languages and has had performances around the world from Tel Aviv to Seoul to Singapore, Johannesburg, Madrid and Mexico City.

When it first opened in New York, critics raved about it. New York Daily News called it a "whimsical and charming family-oriented production about the innocent joys and sometimes simple sorrows of growing up."

The New York Post called it "cheery and uplifting." The New York Times raved "'Children's Letters to God' has a sweet, warm heart." The Wall Street Journal's Zagat Theater Survey dubbed the show "a smile-making musical for all ages."

Stuart Hample, creator of the best-selling book, has adapted "Children's Letters to God" from the page to the stage with music by David Evans ("Birds of Paradise") and lyrics by Douglas J. Cohen ("No Way to Treat a Lady"). Bart Guingona directs with Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo as assistant director, Michael Williams as musical director, Denisa Reyes as choreographer and Gino Gonzales as production designer.

"Children's Letters to God" goes onstage on a limited run Aug. 31-Sept. 2 at RCBC Plaza's Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium. Text 0920-9211231; Call 8919999.

CAST of "Children's Letters to God"

UST Singers

UST Singers off to Taipei

THE UNIVERSITY OF SANTO Tomas Singers serenade Taiwanese audiences once more, as they have been invited to the 4th Taipei Philharmonic Summer Festival on July 28-Aug. 7.

The choir will represent the Philippines to the annual musical gathering with choirs from China, Hungary, Russia, Taiwan and the United States of America.

Professor Fidel G. Calalang Jr., conductor, will also present a lecture on Philippine Choral Music and a demo-concert featuring the successful story of the UST Singers in the international concert stage. The national event will be capped by a special performance of all participating choirs at the historic National Concert Hall in Taipei.

The festival is a project of The Taipei Philharmonic Foundation for Culture and Education under professor Dirk Du Huey. It is the choir's second time in Taiwan, this time performing with artists from other nations, exchanging cultural experiences and building cultural ties.

The UST Singers, under Calalang, have garnered various prizes and accolades from competitions and festivals in Europe, Asia, the United States, Mexico and Canada, including the 1995 Choir of the World Grand Prize in the United Kingdom.

In 2008, the choir will embark on its 14th International Concert Tour in Europe and the US.

Top debate teams 'Square Off'

WHO WILL REPRESENT THE PHILIPPINES in the next "Worlds," that is, the 2008 World Universities Debating Championship?

Find out as the country's top university debate teams square off weekly for the honor in "Square Off: The Philippine Debate Championship" every Wednesday, 8-9 p.m., on ANC, the ABS-CBN News Channel, Aug. 1-Nov. 21.

The 16 universities fielding their best debaters are Ateneo de Manila University, University of the Philippines-Diliman, University of the Philippines-Manila, De La Salle University, College of Saint Benilde, University of Santo Tomas, Western Mindanao State University, San Beda College, Lyceum of the Philippines, University of the Philippines-Baguio, University of Baguio, Ateneo De Zamboanga University, Ateneo De Davao University, Xavier University, Polytechnic University of the Philippines and the Mindanao State University.

The debates on ANC's "Square Off" will use a short form of the British Parliamentary format used at Worlds, and will be moderated by ANC anchor Twink Macaraig. The panel of judges will be made up of veteran debaters and accredited adjudicators such as 2001 Worlds finalist, lawyer Enrique de la Cruz; 2006 Philippine Bar topnotcher Joanne de Venecia; and chief adjudicator for the 2007 Philippine Inter-Collegiate Debating Championship Carl Ng, among others.

ANC's partner in this project, Philippine Graphic, will send the winning team on an all-expense-paid trip to Bangkok, Thailand, where this year's Worlds will be held Dec. 27-Jan. 5, 2008.

Dulaang UP stages 'Pasyon ni Kristo'

IN CELEBRATION OF THE CENTENNIAL OF the University of the Philippines, Dulaang UP is opening its 32nd Theater Season with "Passion of the Christ/Pasyon ni Kristo" under the direction of Dulaang UP founder, professor emeritus Tony Mabesa.

This production in English and Filipino is based on the Wakefield Mystery Plays of Medieval England and a *senakulo* from Cutud, San Fernando, Pampanga, a town famous for the actual nailing on the cross of several residents every Good Friday.

The English play is translated into Filipino by Jon Lazam, with additional adaptation by Sir Anril Tiatco from "Martir sa Golgotha" and "Pasyon Genesis." "Passion/Pasyon" is the first *senakulo* presentation of Dulaang UP.

Romnick Sarmenta leads the ensemble as Jesus Christ. Together with Sarmenta are Stella Cañete as Mary; Roy Alvarez and Richard Cunanan alternating as Pilate; Ku Aquino as Caiaphas; Ricky Ibe as Annas (alternating with Ces Aldaba); Jeremy Domingo as John the Baptist (alternating with Dante Balboa); Andoy Ranay and Neil Ryan Sese alternating as Judas; Mailes Kanapi as Mary Magdalene (alternating with Diana Malahay); Joel Saracho as Lazarus; and Angie Ferro as Martha/Mary Jacobi (alternating with Liza Diño).

"Passion/Pasyon" opened July 18 and will run until Aug. 12 at the Wilfrido Ma. Guerrero Theater. Visit Dulaang UP Office at Palma Hall 136, UP Diliman, Quezon City; or contact Luz de Luna at 0917-6206224, 9261349, 4337840 and 9818500 local 2449. Visit www.upd.edu.ph/~dup.

TONY Mabesa

ROMNICK Sarmenta

Philippine Opera Company keeps the art . . . From page C1

leaving no stone unturned and, this early, it is already preparing for the mounting of this big musical event. The cast will be selected through auditions that will be held soon. Included in the preparations are the holding of master classes in acting, stage movement, dancing and modeling.

Because the production needs some P8 million for its realization, POC enlists the support of everyone who cares for opera to be alive and kicking on the local musical scene. Becoming members of the company's Friends of Philippine Opera can support the worthy cause POC espouses. Contributions range from P1,000-P500,000 annually, depending on the status and capacity of the donor.

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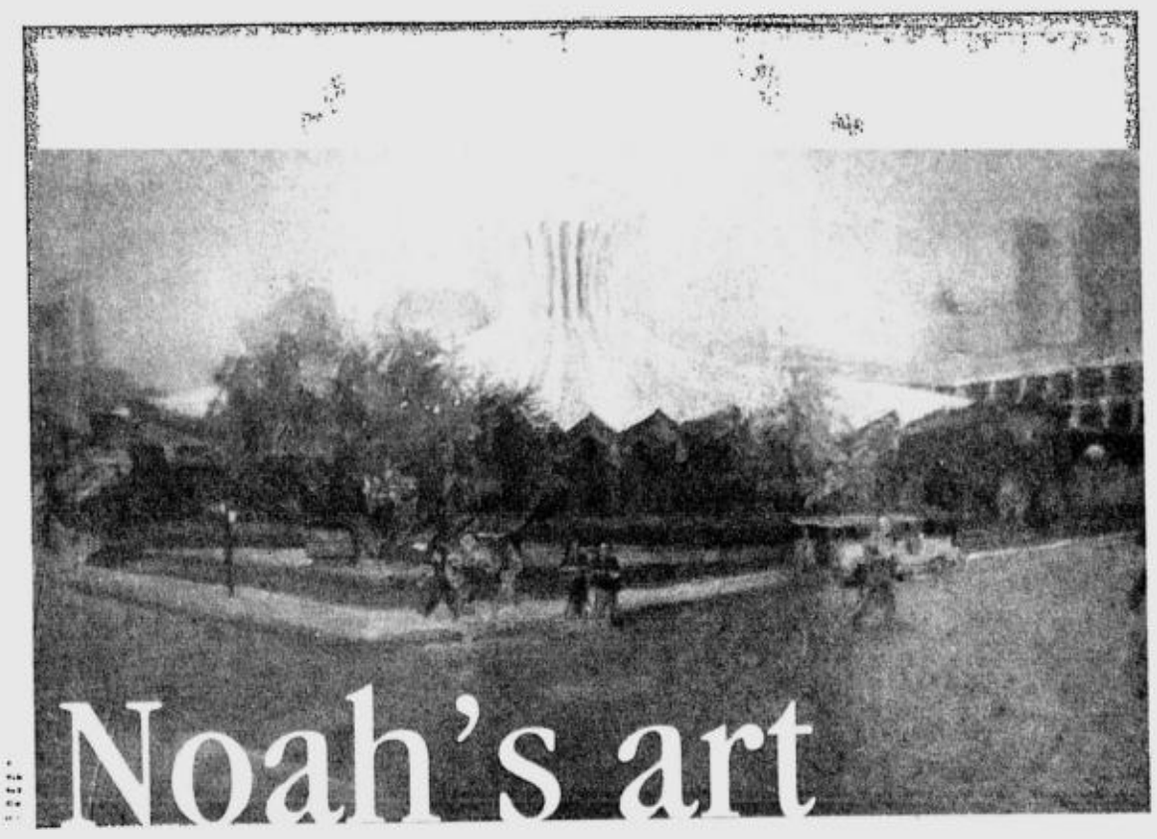

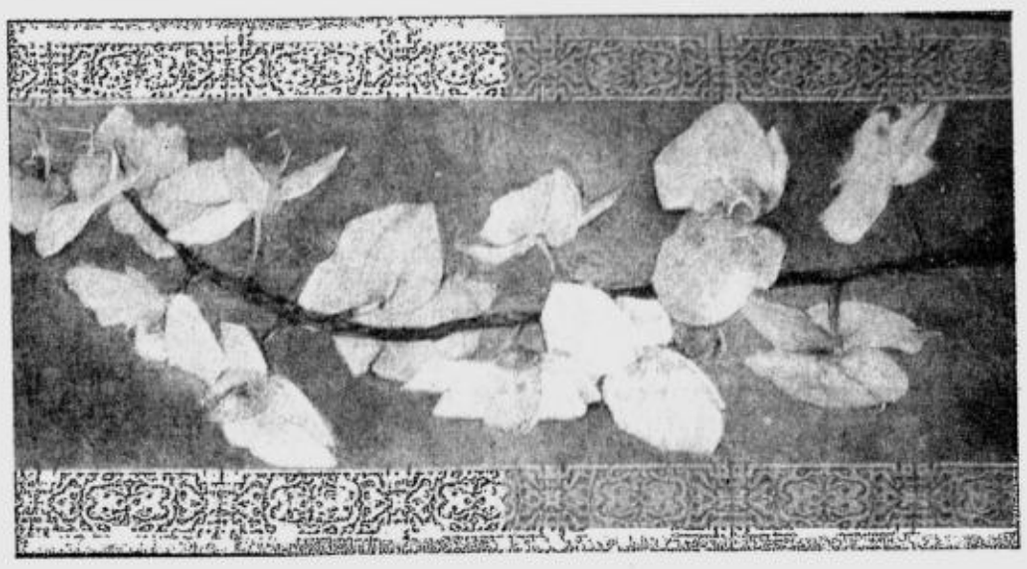

MERRILL tapestry (above); "CHURCH in Makati" (left)

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Noah's art

Mark Merrill employs the Fibonacci theory drawn from the Bible

By Dexter R. Matilla
Contributor

ARTIST AND MISSIONARY Mark Merrill is trying to change the world—one artwork at a time.

And he's doing it by donating proceeds from his exhibits to the Christian Cultural Development Foundation (CCDF), an evangelical, interdenominational, nonprofit ministry supported by various churches around the world that provides street children and prostitutes a chance at a better life.

Yellow Door Gallery and Power Plant Mall recently presented "Divine Design," a collection of paintings and tapestries by Merrill. What makes the works unique is that Merrill uses a compositional tool referred to as the Golden Mean or the Fibonacci theory.

"God has given man a means to understand and express beauty," Merrill says.

As early as Genesis, when Noah was given instructions to build an ark in preparation for the Great Flood, God gave him precise proportions for the front and back shapes of the boat, which is 50 cubits wide and 30 cubits high (75 ft x 45 ft).

In Exodus 31, when God gave Moses the Ten Commandments, He gave him a pattern for the long sides of the Ark of the Covenant and the atonement cover—2½ cubits by 1½ cubits (45 in x 27 in).

"Art terms for this are the Golden Section, Divina Proportiona, the Fibonacci Ratio or Dynamic Symmetry," Merrill says.

"Cezanne, Da Vinci, Gershwin, Bach, Le Corbusier have consciously used this relationship order in their masterworks. I try to follow their examples by using this divine order in my work. I call this means of composing a Divine Pattern. One can see this pattern in the relationship of the shapes and lines in my paintings. In a different relationship, I pattern my daily life to a divine order."

Merrill's paintings are meticulously drawn with graphite before application of paint. This is noticeable as some areas around the painting leave the patterns exposed, giving it a feel of being an "architectural art" or "artchitecture."

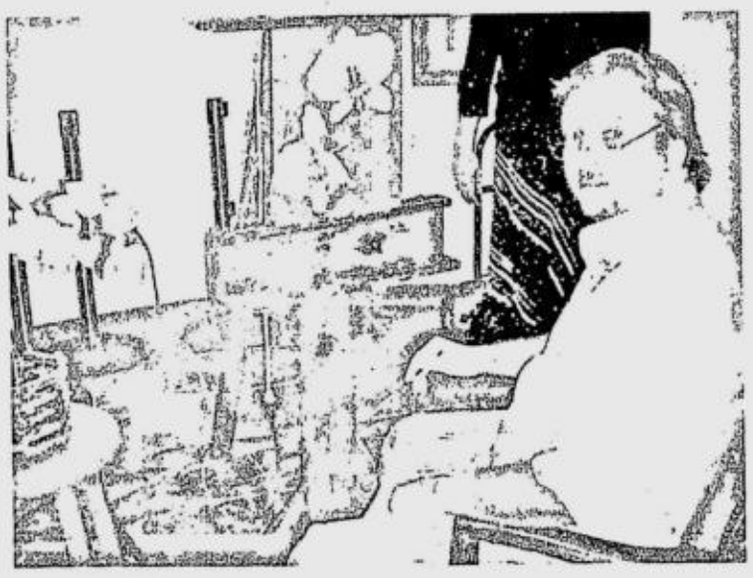
Merrill is a cofounder of the CCDF along with his wife Robin, who is listed on the World's Who's Who of Women. His efforts and passion fuel the foundation and its programs such as "Mission Gifts."

Those under this life-changing program create products such as lamps and candle covers. No two lamp and candle covers are alike. They are designed and fabricated by Wendy Regalado, an architect and designer from Antipolo.

CCDF also reproduces Merrill's paintings in greeting cards which use handmade paper, from Village Handcrafters. The ministry supplies jobs for relocated squatters. The paper is produced using old-fashioned methods that are acid-free and environmentally friendly.

"Divine Design" by Mark Merrill is at the Yellow Door Gallery, Rockwell 1 Corridor, Lifestyles Wing, Power Plant Mall, Makati City. Call 0920-9624347.

E-mail the author at dxmatilla@yahoo.com



THE ARTIST

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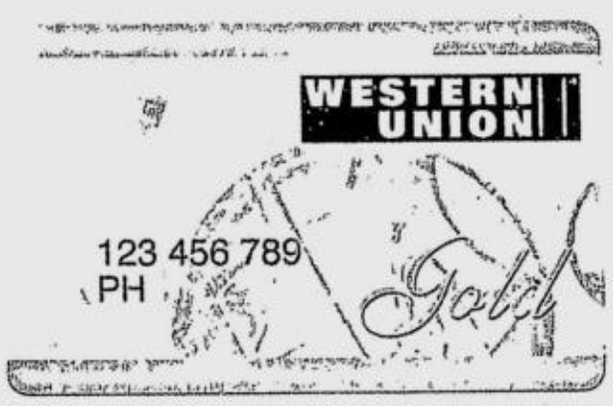

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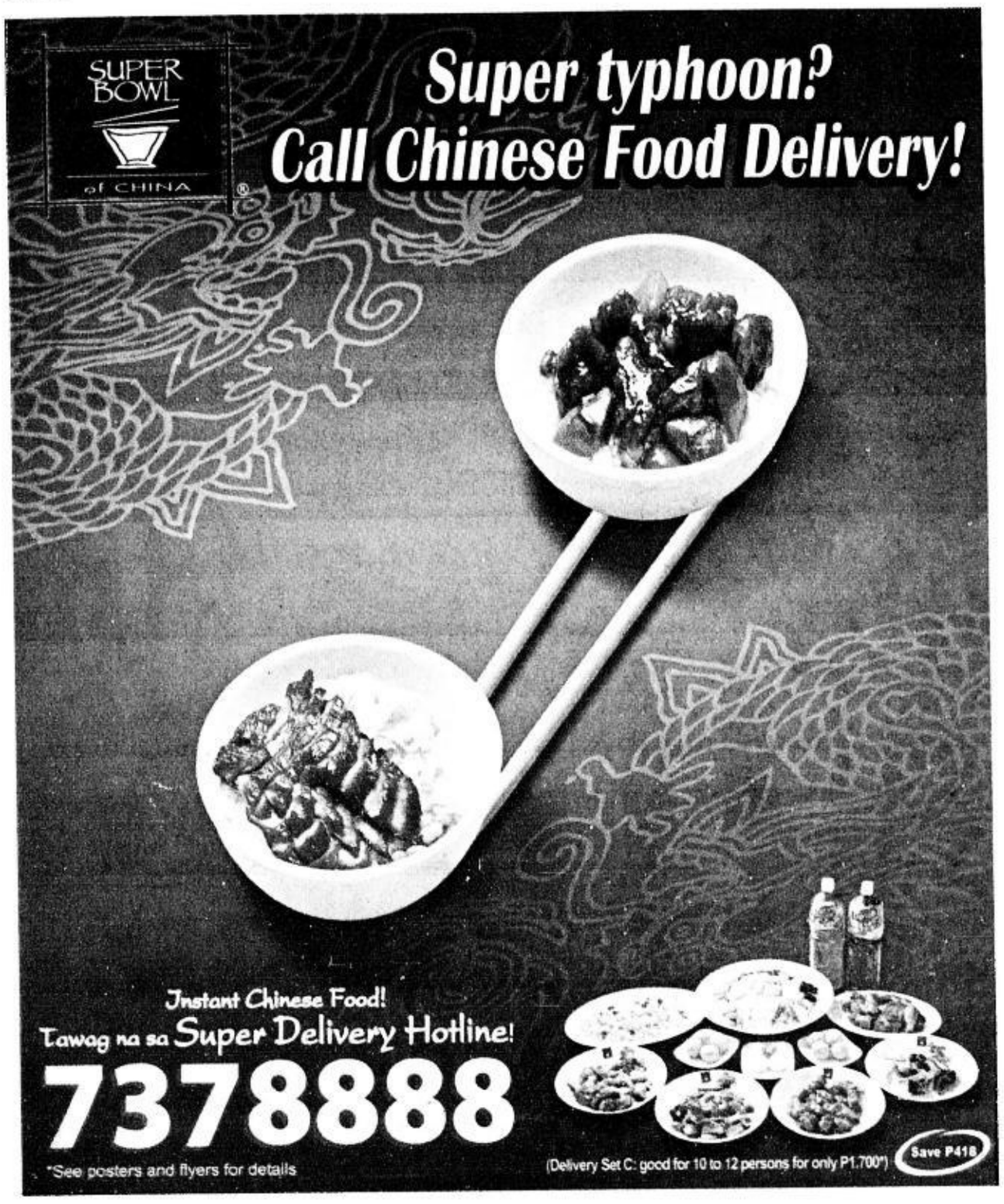
MUSEO PAMBATA MARKS 6TH YEAR OF GUIDES' CORNER

Museo Pambata (MP) recently welcomed children and parents to celebrate the 6th anniversary of the "Museum Guides' Corner." The Museo guides organize sessions on arts and crafts every second and fourth Sunday of the month; the sessions are known as "MP Guides' Corner." MP guides will soon publish an arts and crafts book. The Sunday event was sponsored by Hinge INQUIRER Publications-Spark Magazine, Jolibee-Rizal Park and other corporations.



Neil Doloricon digital prints

"LIBERTY"

NEIL DOLORICON will hold a solo exhibition of digital prints, "Salungat," which is the Filipino word for "opposing" or "contrary," at Kaida Art Gallery, 2/F, GFO Bldg., Kamuning Road, Diliman, QC.

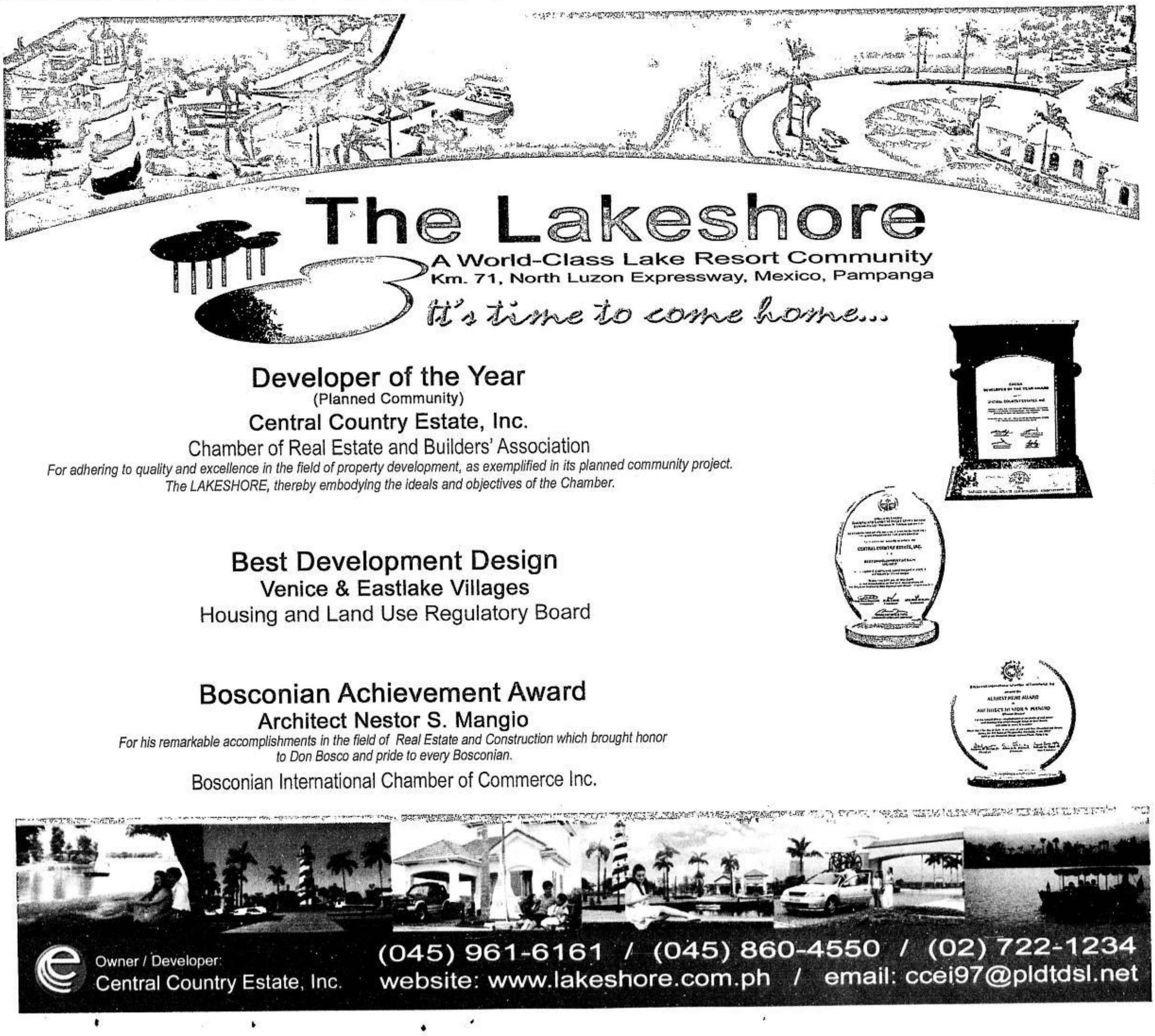
Doloricon uses images from books and magazines and transforms them—using Adobe Photoshop—into collages to express political statements on various issues. The result is a range of themes and issues ranging from the United States-Iraq War of contemporary times to the Philippine-American War at the turn of the 19th century, to the Vietnam War of the 1960s—all of which are very relevant to contemporary political problems.

Other themes dwell on some historical icons like Jesus Christ, Mao Zedong and Lenin—all of whom very influential in the political and cultural movements during the '60s and '70s. Doloricon also appropriated Greek sculptures in his art works and translated them into another artistic milieu.

In the exhibit, the artist will interact with poets, who will each render a poetic interpretation of the digital prints. This is a way of allowing interaction between two artistic disciplines—the verbal and the visual—with the common objective of promoting cultural awareness of art and literature.

The digital art exhibit is sponsored by Epson.

"ANGEL de la Guardia"



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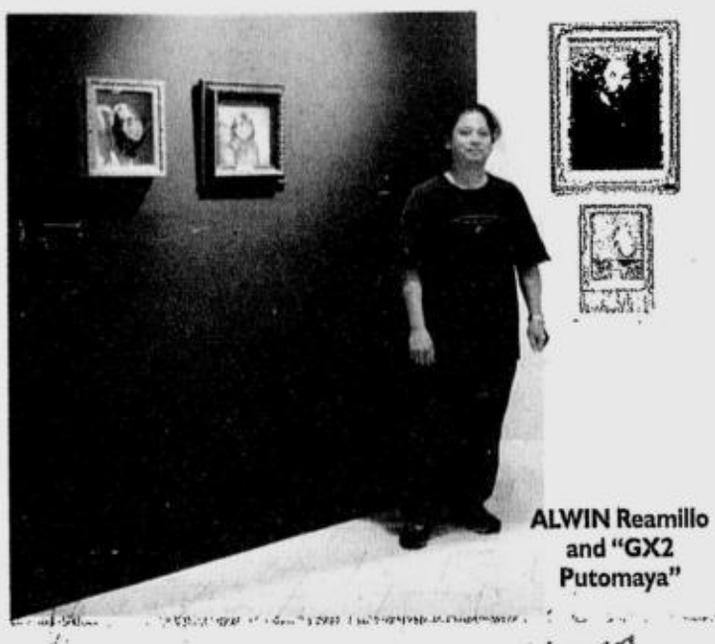
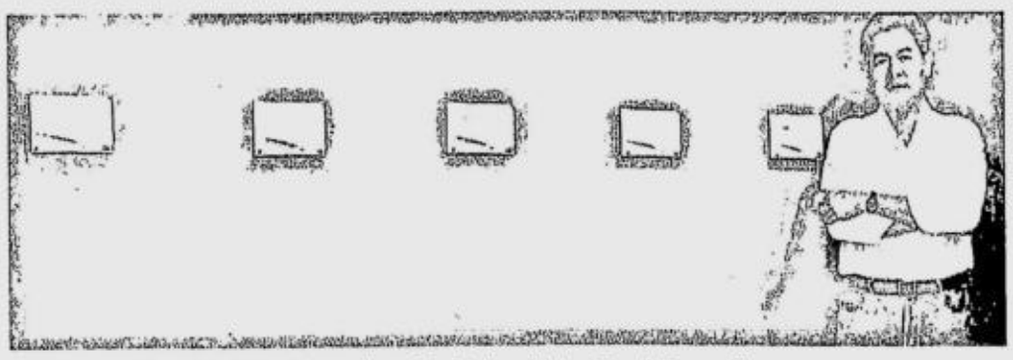


ALWIN Reamillo and "GX2 Putomaya"



GERARDO Tan with "The Moon (Luna) in Prison (John Cage) Trance"

Juan Luna's 'The Violinist' acquires a piano string

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

IN LOPEZ MUSEUM AT BENpress Building in Ortigas Center, Pasig, among the paintings and drawings of the Filipino masters, I saw for the first time in my museum-starved life Juan Luna's "España y Filipinas," a portrait of Gen. Ramon Blanco, and "El Violinista," who, I am sure was his violinist-brother Manuel.

What caught my eye was another version of "El Violinista" just beside the original work. It showed the piano string sticking out of the violin covered with crab shells and highlighted by a sheep's jawbone. Several other paintings of Luna have a second version and the presence of crab shells dominates the duplicate version.

Am I seeing double? Yes. But not quite literally.

The duplicate, reworked versions are installation works of Australia-based Conceptual artist Alwin Reamillo, who calls it "GX2 Putomaya." A text goes like this:

Gaya gaya puto maya
La Luna la luna
Ang buwan ang buan

Reamillo's latest installation is part of the exhibition "Dime a Dozen," an attempt to look into the notion of replications and reproductions and how the new images based on the original works are transformed in the eyes of the Conceptual artists.

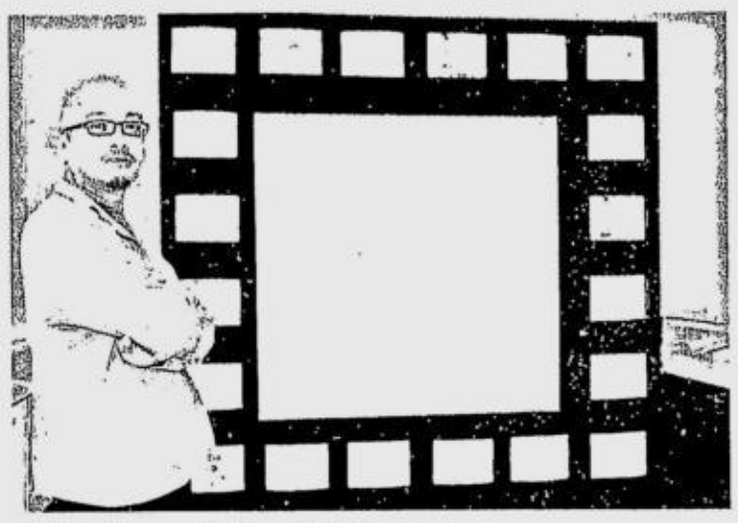
In another piece by Gerardo Tan, Luna's "Nobes, Mar y Tierra" (Clouds, Sea and Land) gets to have several versions mounted in small frames like the original. But as you enter Tan's space, you are caught by a surveillance camera, which is part of his installation work called "The Moon (Luna) in Prison (John Cage) Trance."

At the far end of the hall, there's someone singing "Strangers in Paradise," and the drawings of Hidalgo spring to life in and out of frames in the video art of Tad Ermitano, called "20 Monitors, One Projector and Five Channels of Video in a Roomful of Twelve Hidalgo Paintings."

Ermitano's work dazzles the senses as the framed drawings, usually static in another part of the gallery, acquire a new life in his video art.

Says museum director Celdi Lopez-Vargas: "This exhibition is really a new direction the museum wants to take. We have these historic iconic collection that can make you feel stuffy and stagnant, especially with the younger audiences. We really want to break away from that mold. We also want to appeal to younger viewers and to make the collection relevant to them. If they just see something from the past, more often than not they are not going to connect, but if you are able to get artists who can interact and you can get various perspectives on how they see the artists and what they are trying to say, it gives

JUAN/ D3



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Most likely, allergic rhinitis yan!

If you think that your kid has an ordinary cold, CHECK AGAIN!
Kasi kapag may pabalik-balik na AHHCHOOS, RUNNY NOSE at WATERY EYES, malamang 'di na 'yan sipon! Most likely, he has ALLERGIC RHINITIS! Kaya 'di ito makukuha lang ng juice or regular cold medicines*. Dapat pedia-recommended BENADRYL AH SYRUP.
It effectively relieves the most bothersome symptoms of allergic rhinitis!

Don't forget! Kung may pabalik-balik na AHHCHOOS, RUNNY NOSE AT WATERY EYES--malamang, allergic rhinitis yan!
I-BENADRYL AH SYRUP!

*refers to cold medicines without antihistamines only.

AHHHHHIa ng ahhchoos!

Ahhchoo!!! Ahhchoo!!! Ahhchoo!!!

Baka may allergic rhinitis ka na!

Check out the difference between allergic rhinitis and common colds

SYMPTOMS	COMMON COLDS	ALLERGIC RHINITIS
Frequent and Regular Sneezing	X	✓
Stuffy Nose	✓	✓
Runny Nose	✓	✓
Itchy Eyes	X	✓
Fever	✓	X
Sore Throat	✓	X
Nasal Discharge	✓	✓ Usually clear
Body aches and pains	✓	X
Triggers/ Causes	Viruses	Allergens (pollen, house dust mites, molds)
Duration	Lasts about a week	Lasts as long as the allergens are present
What your doctor may advice	Rest, fluids, pain relievers, decongestants	BENADRYL AH

Remember! Basta allergic rhinitis, Benadryl AH!

AHHHHHIa ng ahhchoos!

VISUAL ARTS

French artist at UST Museum

The University of Santo Tomas Museum of Arts and Sciences holds the exhibit "Tremblements" by England-based French screen print artist Vincent Moya. Featuring screen prints which had been exhibited in England and France, the exhibit is on view until July 31 at the UST Museum (UST Main Bldg., España, Manila; tel. 7811815, 4061611 local 8269). The exhibit will also be on view Aug. 13-20 at Enterprise Center, the TEC Art Hall, 3/L Tower 2, 6766 Ayala Ave. and Paseo de Roxas, Makati City.

PRINT by Vincent Moya

Vinluan at Blanc

Paulo Vinluan presents "Ideal Theories and Other Trivial Matters of the Heart" Aug. 8-29 at Blanc, 2E 107 H.V. de la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati (tel. 0920-9276436). "My paintings have always been a reflection of myself in current situations that I am in," says Vinluan. "The paintings in the exhibit is a dialogue between the ideals we set ourselves to do and the reality of striving to paint that picture, by the numbers, as we see it."

Genilo at SSS Gallery

Judge Lita S. Tolentino-Genilo will hold her first one-woman show Aug. 3-27 at the SSS Gallery and Antiques, 2/F, SSS Building, East Avenue, QC. Genilo will present 30 paintings in oil and acrylic, landscapes and still lifes. Her still lifes evoke memories of all sorts of poetic ideas and each form has been beautifully modeled to convey its three-dimensional quality. The exhibit is for the benefit of the Art Discovery and Learning Foundation Inc. scholarship programs.

Magbuhat-Aguado at PHC

Myla Magbuhat-Aguado will showcase her latest works July 23-Aug. 11 at Art Gallery, Lobby of the Philippine Heart Center, East Avenue, QC. Her favorite subjects are women doing native craft, as well as colorful flora and green landscapes. She will be joined in the exhibit by Lloyd Ty, a budding photographer

Estrada at Nicotina

"Tito Estrada at the Boulevard" runs until July 31 at Nicotina Garden Pavillion, Roxas Boulevard (tel. 5517906 or 9242558). Estrada is a flamboyant, articulate self-taught artist who has made the capiz shell the center of his paintings. The Nicotina exhibit, however, shows a move to smaller pieces, more contemplative colors and new usage of the capiz shell.

National Museum workshop

The National Museum will conduct the 11th Basic Museology Training Sept. 4-14 at the National Museum Building, P. Burgos Street, Ermita, Manila. Museum specialists and noted figures in the cultural community will share their expertise on various subjects. A registration fee of P6,500 includes field trip to selected museums, supplies and materials, and snacks. Deadline for registration is Aug. 16. Call 5270278.

Banglos sculptors at Gateway

The Banglos sculptors present their wooden masterpieces in an exhibit until July 31 at 2/F Gateway Mall, Cubao, QC. The artist group from General Nakar, Quezon, showcases recent sculptural creations. Barangay Banglos was one of the hard-hit communities by successive typhoons in 2004. Through a project initiated by Smart to help the typhoon victims, together with sculptor Rey Paz Contreras, the fishermen/farmers were introduced to driftwood sculpture as an alternative source of livelihood.

Multimedia at Glorietta

"Illuminous Visions," an exhibit of retroactive images based on a psychedelic theme by the De La Salle-College of St. Benilde Multimedia Arts students, will open July 30 at Art Space Gallery, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati. The exhibit, which features the works of José Lorenzo Taylor, Jan Patrick Reyes, Mark Derrick Pizarro and Catherine Joy Aquino, runs until Aug. 5. Call 0915-7423107 or 0922-8834448.

Magsaysay-Ho at Crucible

Anita Magsaysay-Ho's "Flowers" will be on view at Crucible Gallery (4/F, Building A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City) on July 31-Aug. 26. Reproductions in sets of four in an edition of 300 will be available for sale. Two of her egg tempera paintings will also be exhibited. Call 635606 .

Dy at Silverlens

Christina Dy presents "Curtains Matching Carpet," until Aug. 4 at Silverlens Gallery, 2320 Pasong Tamo Ext., Warehouse 2, Yupangco Bldg. Instead of viewing finished work, gallery visitors will be privy to the artist's creative process as she makes her mixed-media work. Call 8160044.

Sison at Finale

Opening on Aug. 2 at Finale Art Gallery (4/F SM Megamall A), "Gingerbread Girls" is an ongoing process in Yasmin Sison's "continuing concerns with the theme of memory and the possibilities inherent in its malleability." Her suite of works depicts girls in dresses, softly gazing or turning their heads from the viewer, holding curious objects such as a wooden rod or a small house. Though seated on what looks like a stable metallic chair, the girls seem to inhabit a mercurial world signified by the swirls and undulations of colors present in their background. It's as if they are, despite their realism, recreated from the aged places of recollection, from "stories told to me when I was young." As studies in the transubstantiating power of time and memory, the works deftly betray their true source (childhood), their inspiration (fairy tales) and their attitude (innocence). The artist argues that one can reclaim this territory, if only through art, and that narrative is the enabling force in this process, settling the windy past in place. "Gingerbread Girls" is on view until Aug. 21. Call 6342411 or visit www.finaleartfile.com.

"BOOBSIE"

Dante Perez in Penguin

FROM DEPICTING DECAY IN ORDINARY citizens, Dante Perez magnifies the festering nature of flesh in another being.

Titled "Lost Angeles," the show is a misplaced paradise of angels who submit to the lure of the senses only to be consumed by the degeneration of the material body. The homogeneity of this host of angels disintegrates into individuality as Perez moves from tidy, bold lines to frenzied strokes. In "Lost Angeles," Perez experiments will a cooler palette quite different from his familiar furious hues.

"Lost Angeles" opens Aug. 1, 7:30 p.m., at Penguin Café and Gallery in Remedios Street, Malate. The show features Siddharta Perez; dark electro-synth bands Saffron Speedway and Scarlet Tears; performance poet-artists Costantino Zicarelli and Angelo Suarez. Exhibit runs until Aug. 15.

Ivi Cosio at Avellana

"T'BOLI"

IVI AVELLANA-COSIO OPENS HER LATEST MAjor solo exhibition Aug. 4, 6 p.m., at Avellana Art Gallery. The show "Repaso (Artmaking 1967-2007)" will feature over 100 artworks in various media, among some of the many done by Avellana-Cosio during the 40 years she has been active in the Philippine professional art scene. To be shown are ethnic-inspired contemporary paintings (the "Baybayin" series) in acrylic on canvas and handmade paper; large-size scrolls; abstracts in lacquer on wood and acrylic on canvas; fine prints, photographs; nudes in pastel and pen-and-ink; and flowers in acrylic and oil pastel.

In 1967, Avellana-Cosio joined her first professional show, the 1st Inter-Asian Graphic Arts Competition and Exhibition. She has exhibited since in numerous solo and group exhibits in museums and private galleries both here and abroad, her latest solo shows being "Available Light," a retrospective of photographs taken over the last 30 years; and "In the Autumn Forest," a show of abstractions inspired by Chinese epic films.

Avellana-Cosio has won prizes for painting, printmaking and sculpture, including the grand prize in the 1971 Annual Philippine Association of Printmaker's Competition; and a second prize for sculpture in the 1975 Art Association of the Philippines Competition.

In 1991, Avellana-Cosio was awarded a Project Grant by the Cultural Center of the Philippines for a large-scale installation at the Little

"BAJU"

"MA-YI"

Keiye Miranda-Tuazon's hyperrealist vision

By Constantino C. Tejero

KEIYE MIRANDA-TUAZON IS AN accomplished artist whose growing fame has been somewhat hampered by the two men in her life.

Her father is the Angono folk artist Nemiranda and her husband is the avant-gardist Wire Tuazon. The popularity or name recall of those two has doubtlessly sapped the name she has been building around her work, and it's certainly not for lack of talent on her part.

Consider the exhibit "Breaking the Silence," pieces in oil on canvas, until Aug. 4 in Blanc Art Space, 2E Crown Tower, 107 HV de la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City.

These are hyperrealist underwater scenes of floating objects and human bodies or body parts, often in extreme closeup so that the interplay of patterns of light and water render the images almost abstract. But the power of suggestion exuded by these abstracted figures can hardly be overemphasized.

Says the artist: "My works are either familiar or unique underwater images of people and objects that float, weave through or swim around. They deal with personal space, time, memory, thoughts and experiences. The images suggest a sense of movement, as the light on the water attempts to recapture the original form. This enables one to trace or transcend the movement of thought, and explore, for instance, the dimension of solace and solitude...

"The moving water serves as an element of defamiliarization, producing an ambiguity of the real and the unreal, thus setting new terms of encountering reality. The stark images create complex patterns, and the depiction of figures exists in the same dreamlike level of memory and time, in which it has a double image signifying the issue of identity. The shadows suggest a condition of change."

"BLUE Summer Morning"

The piece "Blue Summer Morning," showing a swimmer's hair scattering in the rippling water as an explosion of black on aquamarine, must be what the artist has in mind when she describes a painting of hers as "an illusion of color," with the play of light implying "the fluidity, changing views and dimensions of water."

"PULLING Me Over"

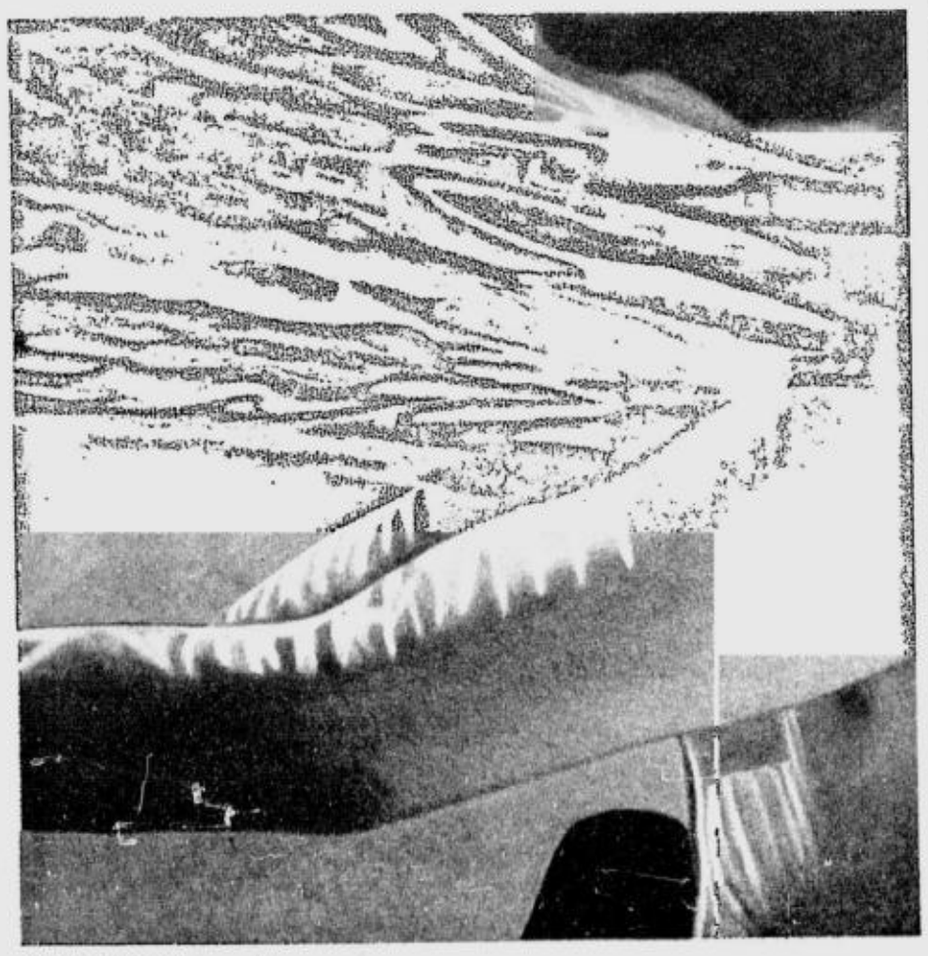
She's not content with mere depiction of commonplace objects and banal activities, however. To her, these images signify a deeper reality and a higher being.

She explicates: "The imagery of submergence in water alludes to the realm of the subconscious and the unconscious. The submerged level of the mind crucially suggests in the articulation of the self. This can be seen or felt during prenatal and birth experiences in the fluid of the mother's womb. The bodies move alone like apparitions in the water, as the viewers are impelled to discover their fluid identities, which is the sense of being and becoming."

In some of these paintings, the viewer couldn't help but read the artist's identity through the images. In the twin pieces "Pulling Me Over" and "Pulling Me Down," for instance, are shown the arms and hands of a man and a woman, so presumably these are the artist and her husband interacting underwater.

Does the first painting suggest something positive, and the second negative? We don't want to go into that as it could be very personal, but by using the first person in the titles, the artist is, in effect, inviting the viewer to enter her personal space.

Miranda-Tuazon can paint as hyperrealistically as her husband does, and the allusiveness of her pieces can be as deep and powerful as his. It's like the case of Frida Kahlo playing second lead to husband Diego Rivera, although, as everyone can see now, her work would certainly not pale beside his.



"PULLING Me Down"

Two for the

DOLTZ PILAR AND BOYKING CUNETA hold a duo show, "Cocktail Hour," at Fiamma on Jupiter Street, Makati.

The show has a truly contemporaneous feel to it, from the box-type, large-size canvases to the chosen subjects that fill up the venue walls.

Cuneta studied interior design at the University of Santo Tomas. Though he initially explored the figurative mode, having been mentored by such stalwarts as Diosdado Lorenzo, Cenon Rivera, Gabriel Custodio and Larry Tronco, he soon discovered Abstract Expressionism and reveled in its unfettered, uncharted ways.

Interpreting the figure in a modern Expressionist style, he was caught up in a unique fusion of colors and emotions, the visual and the visceral, reason and intuition.

Cuneta delves into a heady mix of im-

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"FISH Vendors," by Jovan Benito (below) "Tuyak," by Amador Barquilla

Rural scenes in twin exhibits

OPENING ON AUG. 3 AT GALERIE FRANCESCA AT the Treasure Trove of Festival Mall, Filinvest, Muntinlupa, is Jovan Benito's "Babae." Her women sell goods, haggle over prices, harvest fish, steal glances at one another, and purse their lips.

In "Flower Vendors," Benito's women bend to the flowers cradled on their arms. Some designs of the flowers are intriguingly mirrored on the skirts of three women. The fragrance is illustrated in the jewel-toned and romantic colors of the artist's palette.

Whistling a momentary halt to the energy of rural life is Amador Barquilla's "Kasayahan (Village Scenes)," which opens at Hall B of Galerie Francesca on the same day. He successfully captures the habits and simple joys of barrio life and the village communal space.

Exploding in exuberant colors are the barrio folk of "Barrio Scene." His panoramic renditions of the activities in rural life populate the canvas without crowding it. Against the rich green earth, people go about their daily routines. We see men tending the earth and their animals, women watching over their children, and the youth exhibiting the strengths in various games. Barquilla's men, women and children exhibit the rhythms that guide their days and nights in a permanent season of plenty.

Benito has 27 pieces in oil on canvas while Barquilla has 25. Both exhibits run until Aug. 20.

Call 8098495. E-mail galeriefrancesca001@yahoo.com.ph.

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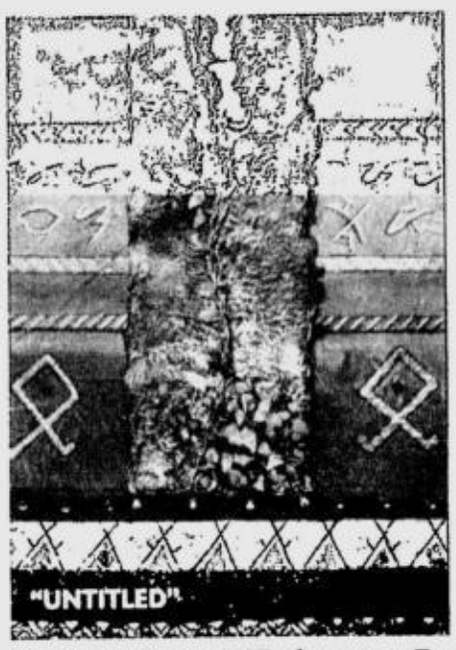

"UNTITLED"

Theater Lobby. In 1997, she won a Top Five award at the Philip Morris Philippine Art Awards, earning her a slot in the finals for that year's Asean Art Awards.

In 1999, she was given by the City of Manila the Araw ng Maynila Patnubay ng Sining at Kalinangan Award for Painting. She is listed on the International Who's Who of Women (Cambridge).

The exhibit will run until Sept. 8. Avellana Art Gallery is at House A-19, 2680 F.B. Harrison St., Pasay City, between Edsa Extension and Libertad, fronting Gideon Academy. Call 8338357.

Lascano and Goh: A match made in Zen in Singapore art exhibit

AT ONE GLANCE, VIEWERS cannot help but be entranced by the natural harmony in Rico Lascano's paintings and Eddie Goh's pottery pieces seem to spontaneously create. But the amazing thing is that Filipino Zen abstract artist Lascano and Singaporean ceramic artist Goh have never met before their Momentous Arts Gallery exhibit at Singapore's Boat Quay.

It took the discerning eye of Allan Teo, Momentous Gallery owner, to put together their very fresh and riveting art styles. Lascano's pictorial Zen landscapes solicit images of transcendent peace and solitude: a gentle mistiness as of rain clouds, aerial visions of distant mountaintops, rippling water in a secluded pond.

Employing the wet-on-wet technique, Lascano preserves the freshness of muted pigments, hushed by washes of greys and monochromes. His "Satori: Clouds" Series may be regarded then as a visual experience that quiets the mind and spirit.

RICO and Chachu Lascano with Singaporean ceramic artist Eddie Goh

"SATORI: Clouds" Series IV

Goh's works, on the other hand, are unique in the sense that they are both innovative and contemplative.

Coby, another Filipino artist featured in the exhibit, presents the perfect contrast with his colorful "Rain" series.

The show's opening was well-received by Singapore-based artists, fashion designers, news writers and newsmakers. It runs till July 24. For more details, visit www.momentousarts.com.

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...ingly transposed by multiple ...nd superimposition, but keeps ... in delicate balance of reality and

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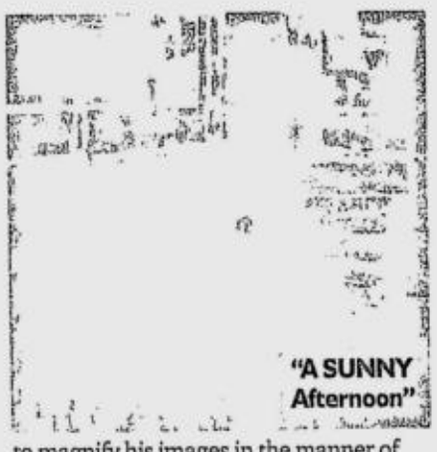
... the opposite of Cuneta's sub... ...derings into the subconscious, ...to fill his spaces with organic col... ...orms, an eco-trip down the earth... ...se. This time he reprises his ...earthen shades and postmodern ...trokes in these new works ...coming as serial arrangement. ...y remarkable is Pilar's rare ability to magnify his images in the manner of Frida Kahlo and Georgia O'Keefe. In a most dynamic sweep, he virtually scrapes the canvas with palette knife to create undulating rhythms and textures and, like a prized chef, proceeds to show his main dish consisting of a postmodern still life.

"Cocktail Hour" opens July 30, 6:30 p.m.



"A SUNNY Afternoon"

Juan Luna's . . .

From page D1

you a platform to reach a wider audience."

Something new

When the idea for this exhibition was brought up by curator Eileen Legaspi Ramirez, the three artists immediately accepted the assignment.

Says Tan: "It was instantly a challenge for me because now I have to do something new. So I used this small Juan Luna landscape to show that art history or how we perceive artists is inextricably linked to what gets collected or what the collector likes for better or worse. That's the reason why I put this surveillance camera, because it catches the viewer inside the museum.

"I like to think that, in some ways, it is a metaphor of how some art activity is controlled by dominant ideology. In conventional painting, you just want to watch the work. Here I want to see the viewer and make the viewing three-dimensional."

The idea is not totally new to Reamillo. In one show in Australia, artists were invited to use the museum objects to create new works. The results were contrapuntal. They opened new possibilities.

Points out Reamillo: "Working with the collection of Juan Luna is, indeed, a rare opportunity. My works usually question iconographic things and their effect on our culture, which involves some kind of social control. If you challenge the power of those icons, you do away with social control and you see the role of artists in the present scheme of things. I used crab shells as a symbol because we as a people or as a nation still don't move forward. We move laterally like crabs. I like the idea of artists as facilitator and not just as a maker."

Ermitano's video art is probably the most technologically complicated, as he had to work with carpenters and electricians and transform the Hidalgo drawings into contemporary video attractions. The message he wants to convey in his work is that the significance of meanings in existing works can also change.

He adds: "What I did was just simply to create a new life out of those pieces. I like moments to happen when viewers see this video art. Perhaps some elements of puzzlement, surprise or revelation."

In this exhibition, Tan tickles the "fetishistic" side of art collectors. Reamillo succeeds in probing deeper into the psyche of Luna as he figures in the country's history. Ermitano gives us a new fascinating way to look at the past with contemporary medium and gives new video twists to Hidalgo's drawings. Out of the blue, museum sleepers are suddenly transformed into computer and Internet attractions.

Concludes curator Ramirez: "What we have been attempting to do at Lopez Museum is to keep the creative space conducive to fresh ideas by engaging contemporary artists to work with pieces buried in history with varied layers of validation encrusted in their frames. I hope viewers will also get the idea that we have a sense of humor about what we do at Lopez Museum."

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Art and child's play

LEO at the awarding ceremony, with PLDT SVP Butch Jimenez; judges Edgar Fernandez, Buds Concovar and Cid Reyes (chair); National Artist Napoleon V. Abueva, Art Association of the Philippines trustee Susan Fetalvero-Roces, AAP president Ramon Orlina, and Directories Philippines president Ricardo D. Bautista

By Marjorie M. Magno
Contributor

ALTHOUGH TODAY'S CHILDREN STILL spend most of their time at play, the nature of games has changed immensely.

Traditional games like *pikô*, *patintero* and *tumbang preso*, *habulan*, *taguam-pung*, jumping rope and marbles continue to be played, alongside sports like basketball and badminton, in some neighborhoods and campuses.

But an increasing share of playtime is going into games on a variety of virtual playgrounds. Urban kids nowadays converge in front of video game consoles, in fun arcades and in Internet cafés.

A seemingly solitary gamer clicking a computer mouse or pounding the keyboard is actually part of a dispersed community of youngsters from all over the metropolis, the nation and even the world who meet up on the battlefields of Ragnarok, Warcraft, and Counter-Strike.

A recent art contest sponsored by the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT) and Directories Philippines Corporation (DPC) brought to fore an aspect of the generation gap that has to do with the games Pinoy children play.

With the theme "Larong Pambata, Noon at Ngayon," the PLDT-DPC Telephone Directory Cover 21st Visual Art National Competition forced student artists—many of them steeped in the electronic games of today—to imagine how different childhood fun had been when their parents were young.

Leorido L. Repique Jr., a Fine Arts senior at Adventist University in Silang, Cavite, captured the change in texture of games over the years with his winning entry "Gagamba Noon, Video Game Ngayon."

Rendered in oil on a bronze plate with photographic engraving, the artwork depicts a visual interplay of the traditional spider fight and a web-based computer game. It is now on the cover of the 2007-08 PLDT-DPC telephone directories, which have a print run of close to a million copies.

The second-prize-winning "Maligayang Pagbabago sa Makulay na Mundo" by Reynan Sanchez of University of the East incorporates foreground-background and new-old elements, and uses old-school sketches of traditional Filipino games such as *luksong-tinik* and *sungka*, framed in techno swirls of electronic gaming.

Many of the 62 finalists from 22 schools, in fact, highlight the contrast between the confined play spaces of today and the wide-open playgrounds of yesteryears. Scanning through the paintings makes one pine for the days when kids loved to get their hands dirty, squeeze into nooks and crevices, climb trees and run to their heart's content.

Play no more

National Artist for Sculpture Napoleon Abueva, who designed the winners' trophies, fondly recalls running down the hills of Tagbilaran, Bohol, with his playmates and their kites, known as *guryon* in the Visayas, which were shaped like airplanes, butterflies and birds.

"We bend the bamboo, then we put *buri* and it makes a sound when it vibrates with the wind," he recounts animatedly. "We would let our kites fly and we'd play till midnight."

He laments that this tradition seems to be dying: "It used to be a sport but not anymore, and most of the time [today] kites are made of paper only."

Alan Ortiz, former president and CEO of the National Transmission Corporation and former chair of the Development Bank of the Philippines, remembers those "swordfights" among his Ateneo Grade School classmates posing as Marvel and the Justice League superheroes.

"During recess, we were all over the rock garden," he says. "This is what Playstation, Nintendo, Wii and other video games have deprived our sons of—the thrill and pain of simulated battle, the bonding of war freaks and aspiring mutants, the sweat, grime and scars of rock-garden skirmishes."

Such simple pleasures are not lost on the Gawad CCP awardee for lifetime achievements in literature and publishing, Gilda Cordero-Fernando, who enjoyed *pikô* (hopscotch) in her youth. She usually had some chalk in her skirt pocket, for drawing the *pikô* diagram. She also made sure she had a "wise" *bato*, a token that didn't miss its target.

"It has to be smooth so it will slide," she explains. "We trimmed the edges so it would be nice and round. The usual *bato* is a chip off a *masetera* [clay flower pot]. But the best *bato* is the *takong ng sapatos ng lalaki—kailangan lumang sapatos para pudpod ang takong* [a well-worn men's shoe heel]. This slides smoothly toward the intended spot."

Once she had a playmate who was always winning and she figured her secret must be her wise *bato*. The playmate told her she could buy it if she wanted.

"I bought it for five centavos," she laughs. "*Aba*, at that time, five centavos could buy you a bar of Hershey's or a box of Milk Duds!"

In the not-too-distant-past, childhood games were also a vehicle for improvisation and imagination. To Ellen Marfil Ongkiko, the independent filmmaker who directed the highly acclaimed "Pusang Gala," this was what fun was all about in her native Navotas.

"There were no traveling carnivals at the time, so we would turn our garage into a horror house," she gleefully recounts. "We would use *yero* [galvanized iron] to make eerie sounds, cans and curtains. We just liked scaring people and being scared as well."

During those days, being resourceful was part of the fun: "We used to play baseball with stocked socks as ball. Then we played cable cars using makeshift pulleys and drums from old cans. We had plenty of space and different kinds of trees, so I'd always be climbing trees as well."

Best of both playgrounds

Partisans would argue that electronic games can sharpen skills in strategic thinking and planning skills, negotiation and exploration, problem-solving and co-operation, logical and creative thinking, and hand-eye coordination. Still, child development professionals lament the fact that many kids these days lack time, space and encouragement to be more physically active and to get their hands dirty to work, create and improvise.

Traditional games, aside from developing motor skills, balance, coordination and flexibility, help children grow socially and emotionally as well. Dr. Shari Nethersole, a pediatrician, points out that these games require that children interact and speak with each other.

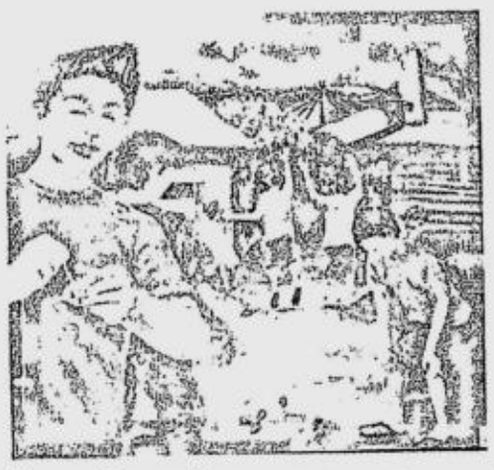
"They have to negotiate rules, take turns, correct and challenge each other. Thus, they are thinking and problem-solving all the time. They can improve their listening and speaking skills. They also have to deal with the emotional consequences of these interactions: handling loss; helping a friend to handle a loss; and being a gracious winner."

While it can be argued that all types of games promote skills and get kids to have fun, traditional games have one marked advantage, says Dr. Nethersole: "They are a lot cheaper than video games!"

Of course, virtual playgrounds are here to stay. Mothers and fathers these days just need to keep their kids' play activities balanced. As the children of yesteryears who had been resourceful at play, these parents should be able to find ways to bring the old games back in the neighborhood.

GRAND Prize winner: "Gagamba Noon, Video Game Ngayon," by Leorido Repique Jr. of Adventist University

New directory covers



"Larong Trumpo" by Jay Rommel Labra, of University of San Carlos

"Tagumpay ng Ating Lahing Kayumanggi," by Jason Saldajeno of Feati University

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PETA'S "Belong Puti"

MIDYEAR 'REPORT CARD': PERFORMING ARTS

Triumphant tributes and fine performances

By Amadís Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

TWO MAJOR DRAMA GROUPS are celebrating separate anniversaries this year: the Philippine Educational Theater Association (Peta); and Tanghalang Pilipino, a resident company of Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Peta, now headed by signature actress CB Garrucho, is marking its 40th year, and it recently treated the press to tantalizing excerpts from some of its future productions at the Peta-Phinma Theater (behind Quezon City Sports Club).

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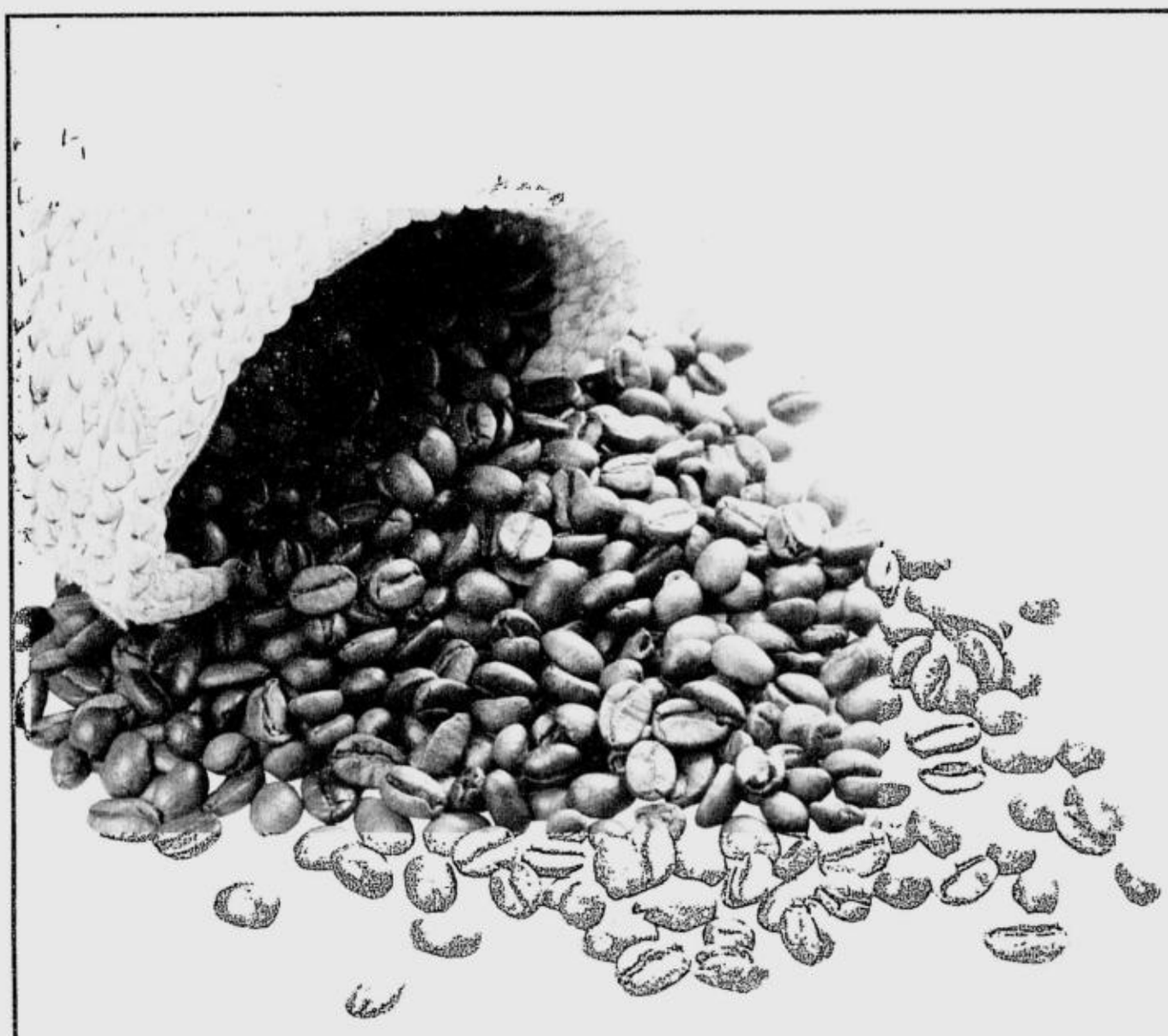

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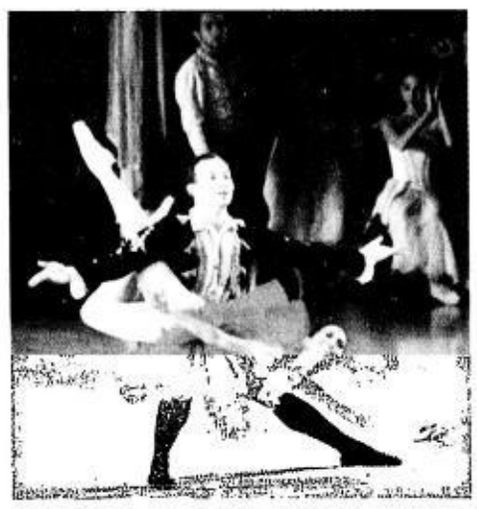
DON QUIXOTE (Matias) woos teasing Kitri (Tan).



BREATHTAKING fish dive from Kitri and Basilio

ANIMATED Lorenzo (Panasyukov) gives his blessing to Kitri and Basilio.

Flashy, solid, swanky

By Elka Krystle R. Requinta
Contributor

PHILIPPINE BALLET Theatre's "Don Quixote" at the CCP Main Theater is not too concerned with Miguel de Cervantes' novels, which turns 402 years old this year.

While the "best-known comic ballet in 19th-century Russian repertory" maintains the farce of a ratty madman, its focus is on one of the story's excerpts about two young lovers and the comic aftermath of forced engagements.

The flashy production, rich in Spanish bravura and classical technique, has been performed countless times by companies around the world.

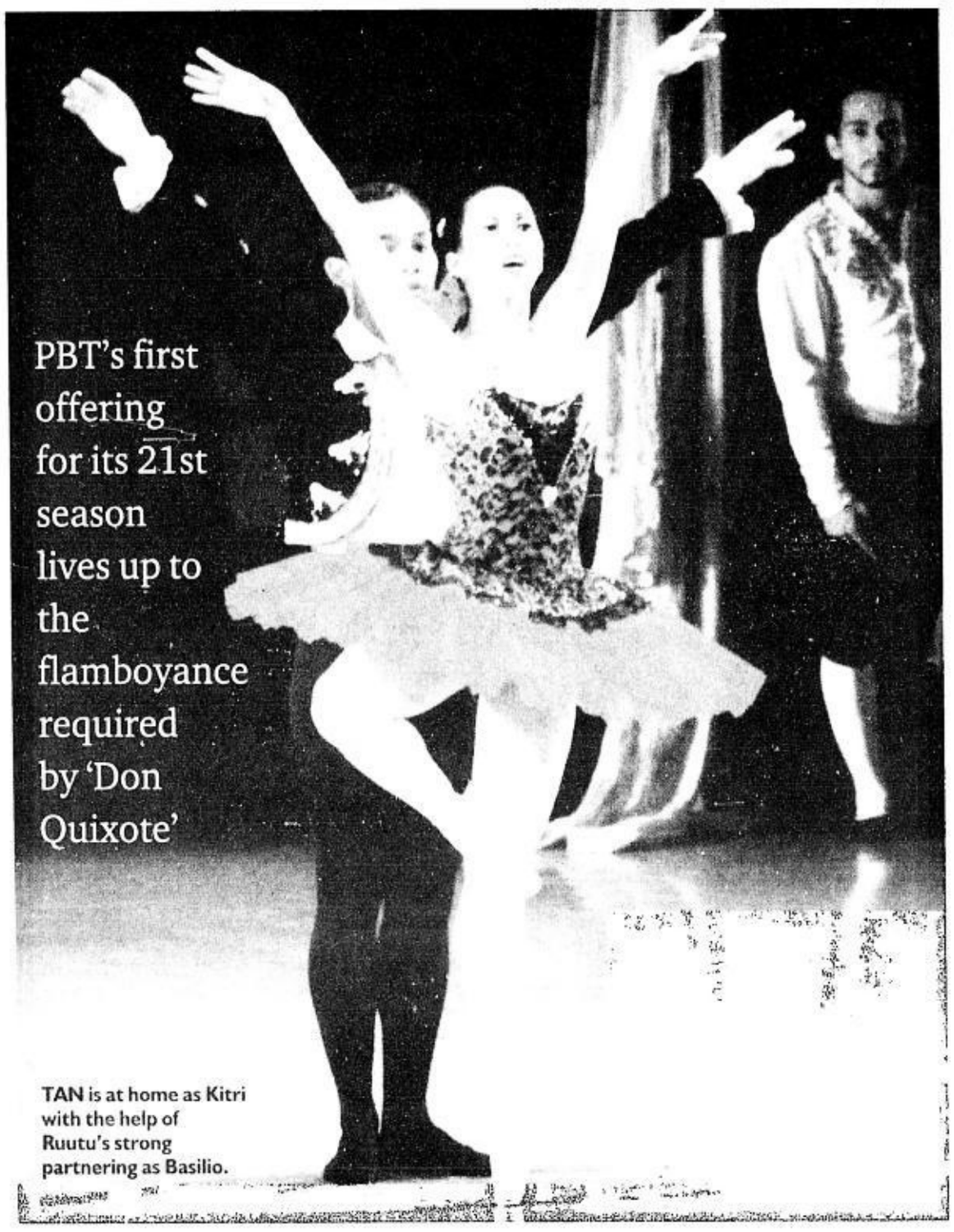
PBT's first offering for its 21st season lives up to its flamboyance, what with principal danseuse Faye Abigail Tan and Filipino-Finnish guest artist Aarne Kristian Henry Ruutu dancing full-out as the young couple Kitri and Basilio.

Nattily exact

A true gem on the stage, 23-year-old Tan thrilled the second-night audience with her charming portrayal of Kitri, the Barcelonian señorita who defeats her father's plans to marry her off to Gamache, a rich suitor.

The teasing, vivacious petite figure in a fuchsia tiered dress in Act 1 commanded attention with her effortless arabesques and stabbing toework.

It was obvious Tan is very much at home in the role. She makes the diagonal leaps (foot bent to the back of the head) made famous by 1950s Russian ballet star Maya Plisetskaya, seem easy. The series of pirouettes and fouettes she did in the coda of the grand pas de deux in Act 3 are nattily exact.



PBT's first offering for its 21st season lives up to the flamboyance required by 'Don Quixote'

TAN is at home as Kitri with the help of Ruutu's strong partnering as Basilio.

Strong pairing

Tan is well-partnered by Ruutu. Their strong pairing is evident in their breathtaking fish dives and one-handed overhead lifts.

Even if Ruutu had more extra hand movements than his leading lady, the principal danseur of Norwegian National Ballet in Oslo, Norway, showed off solid prowess as the tenacious Basilio, whose role demands solo variations that could test the stamina of any ordinary dancer.

The stocky 24-year-old debuted on the Philippine stage with exciting leaps and turns—and a comic "suicide"—with such elegant stylishness that it came as a surprise when he said in an interview that it was his first time to dance the role.

A recipient of numerous awards from international ballet competitions, Ruutu is the son of Teresita Zurbano, formerly of the Philippine Madrigal Singers and now accompanist at the Finnish Ballet Theater in Oslo.

Alternating in the roles of Kitri and Basilio are Joan Geraldine Ayap and Jared Jehowil Tan, respectively. Ayap awed the audience with her sinuous backbends as Mercedes, one of Kitri's friends.

Comic relief

Eugene de los Santos' sweetly funny Sancho, Joel Matias' spectral Don Quixote and Stanley Cañete's foppish Gamache all provided comic relief.

Equally hilarious was PBT ballet master Anatoly Panasyukov as Lorenzo, who also directed the show.

Spanish swank

The corps de ballet's performances were loaded with Spanish swank. There were noteworthy bits of dancing throughout when the corps, with more character dancing and mime, adeptly manipulated their tambourines, fans and silk cloaks.

Cape-twirling Peter San Juan leered as the lead matador Espada, another friend of Kitri's. The myriad of wood nymphs in bouncing tulle led by Ayap as the Dryad Queen in the sublime forest scene elicited oohs and aahs from the audience.

The colorful costumes, elaborate backgrounds and light design set the mood for the double-bill production, except for the confusing lighting in the windmill scene where Don Quixote fought with a giant windmill to protect his "lost" imaginary love.

'Petipa-plus'

Ludwig Minkus' booming accompaniment is meshed with choreography reconstructed from Panasyukov's memory of his dancing years with Moscow's legendary Bolshoi Ballet.

Originally choreographed by luminary Marius Petipa for Bolshoi, the ballet has transcended into what is now called a "Petipa-plus" creation, because of some adds-on by Aleksandr Gorsky and well-loved virtuoso danseurs of their time: the Russian defectors Rudolf Nureyev and Mikhail Baryshnikov.

PBT's 21st season continues with "Palikhayaw (Paglikha ng Sayaw)," a concert of Filipino choreography in September; and "The Nutcracker" in Novermber.

Triumphant tributes and fine performances

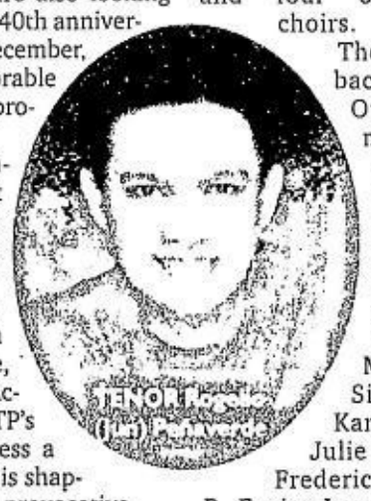
From page E0

From page E1

The season opened this July, and the plays lined up are "Batang Rizal" by Christine Bellen (July-September); "Romulus D'Grayt" by Friedrich Durrenmatt (a repeat, September-October); "Skin Deep" by Vincent de Jesus (February-March 2008); and "Komedi Club" (February-March).

Hmmm, "Skin Deep," a comic play with music, has the makings of a hit.

Music lovers are also looking forward to Peta's 40th anniversary concert in December, featuring memorable songs from past productions.



As for Tanghalang Pilipino, it celebrated its 20th year with a festive Mass-dinner at the Milky Way Ballroom on Arnaiz Avenue, Makati City. Actress Joy Soler, TP's ED, gave the press a preview of what is shaping up to be a provocative season starting in August.

The season opens with the eagerly anticipated *zarzuela* by Nicanor G. Tiongson, "Pilipinas Circa 1907," with music by Lutgardo Labad et al.; "Mulan" by Rody Vera, with music by Jude Balsamo; "EJ" (Evelio Javier and Edgar Jopson) by Ed Maranan; "Kudeta!" by Mustapha Matura (translated by George de Jesus); and, finally, a musical version of "Oro Plata Mata" (libretto by Chris Millado and Dwight Gaston).

The directors are Millado, Dennis Marasigan (TP's new artistic director), Floy Quintos and Peque Gallaga.

Double whammy

At the CCP, music director Eugene Castillo closed the 23rd season of Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra (PPO) with a triumphant, double-whammy tribute to 19th-century composer Anton Bruckner. Forceful and grown more confident, Castillo guided the PPO through Bruckner's mighty Symphony No. 9 and, even more excitingly, the spectacular "Te Deum," with the Philippine Madrigal Singers and four other first-rate choirs.

The Madz was backed up by the Our Lady of Fatima University Chorale; College of the Immaculate Conception Chorale; Coro de San Sebastian; and the Manila Chamber Singers. Soloists Karlene Denolo, Julie Ann Hernandez, Frederick de Santos and R. Enrico Lagasca contributed to the success of the evening.

The PPO's 24th season opens Sept. 7.

Unfamiliar works

It was brave of the Clarion Chamber Ensemble, headed by African-American flutist David Johnson, to come up with unfamiliar works by Filipino and other composers in "Primarily Pinoy" (at Philamlife Theater).

Composer Verne de la Peña was around to conduct his work in progress; and program host Bert Robledo wondered how Lucrecia (Tita King) Kasilag could have composed the romantic piece performed, while living in a state of single-blessedness, or something to that effect.

The beautiful "Lupang Hinirang" by Restie Umali, the only familiar work, performed by baritone Robledo and the whole ensemble, brought the concert to a rousing conclusion.

Brilliant Juilliard-trained pianist Cristine Coyuito triumphed in the Manila Symphony Orchestra concert (at the CCP) with Grieg's Piano Concerto in A Minor, backed up by conductor Helen Quach, who whipped the young MSO members into shape. It was one of the most exciting concerts of the first half of the year, and perhaps of the year.

In a benefit concert for the Maningning Miclat Foundation (at the University of the Philippines Church of the Risen Lord), multitalented Banaue Miclat, sister of the late poet-artist, disarmed the audience with her spiels and quality singing. Rising young tenor Dondi Ong was also in fine form, scaling the high notes (B flat) in the killer aria "Nessun Dorma."

Wonderful production

Classically trained singing actress Joy Virata, playing a tone-deaf diva, was a scream in Repertory Philippines' "Glorious" (at OnStage, Greenbelt I, directed by Baby Barredo). It was one of Virata's finest performances ever.

The wonderful production was enhanced by precious film clips of the era (1944), with the golden voice of diva Galli-Gurci (who once visited the Philippines) in the background.

The Rep's Children's Theater presentation is "Cinderella" (August-December), while its big musical for the year is the much-loved "Fiddler on the Roof" (November-December).

The Russians came, were seen/heard, and conquered. The latest was pianist Sergey Kuznetsov, who brought a masculine, no-nonsense style to the keyboard, punctuated by powerful chords, thrilling runs and tender lyrical passages. His total involvement in his music, especially in Ravel's "Gaspard de la Nuit," wowed the aficionados at the Philamlife Theater.

P. Tariman's Music News & Features next presents baritone Andrew Fernando and pianist Mary Anne Espina on Aug. 18, also at the Philamlife.

The Philippine Showband Musicians Union (PSMU), after finally being recognized by Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA), has launched itself, in effect, although it has been around for sometime now.

The venue was the Talent Asia Entertainment Studio on Congressional Avenue, Quezon City. And the panel of judges assessed the performers and showbands who are eyeing Japan and other foreign markets.

Lending a classical air of distinction to the pop-rock proceedings were the non-auditioning members of the Andres Bonifacio Concert Choir (ABCC) under leading composer-arranger Jerry A. Dadap. They interpreted Dadap's "Ama Namin" (Our Father), his demanding "Alleluia," and time-honored love songs like "Maalala Mo Kaya" and "Ang Tangi Kong Pag-ibig"

The choir was founded by Dadap in 1965 but is now composed mostly of young, musically gifted performers. They have become the cultural arm of Mother Earth Philippines.

It was a thrill for the members to sing (along with operatic soloists) at the Luneta Grandstand on Earth Day (April 22), and at the CCP during World Environment Day (June 5).

American tour

"Something to Crow About," the disarming, folksy *zarzuela* by National Artist Alejandro Roces and composer Freddie Dimadura, has just completed its tour of US cities (New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles—June 21-24, June 28 and July 1).

The performers were Joel Trinidad, Liesl Batucan, Lionel Guico, Cynthia Culig, Frank Rivera, Bong Embile, the University of Santo Tomas Liturgicon Singers, and the Earthsavers Ensemble. Stage design was by Len Santos, with direction by Cecile Guidote.

ANDRES Bonifacio Concert Choir with choirmaster Jerry A. Dadap (second from left) and Odette Alcantara (with white cap) during Earth Day at the Quezon City Memorial Circle

The Santa Teresita Parish Chorale under Ronald Raz is easily one of our best parish- and barangay-based choirs. It won gold and silver medals in the 2006 Hong Kong International Choir Festival.

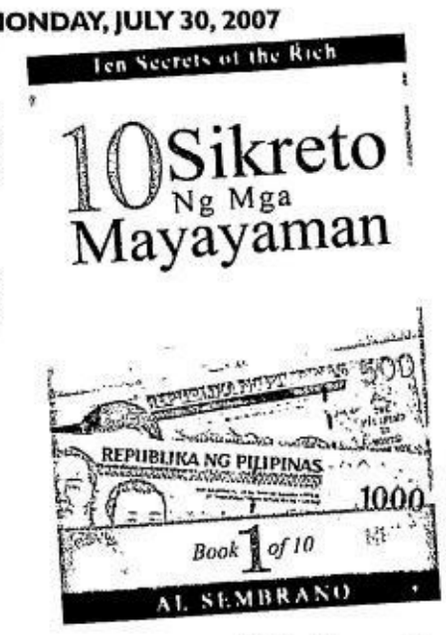
At a recent fund-raising concert at the Philamlife Theater, the chorale members again displayed their skill in rendering demanding sacred songs along with more familiar tunes in several languages, like Spanish, Latin, Hiligaynon (Ilonggo) and Cebuano (Binisaya).

The choir left again this month to compete in an international choralfest in Patthaya, Thailand.

Outstanding young tenor Rogelio (Jun) Peñaverde has been admitted into the Master of Music Program of the prestigious Manhattan School of Music in the US, and he staged a *despedida* concert at the Antonio Molina Hall (Equitable PCI Bank Tower).

It was a felicitous evening of well-loved operatic arias and Filipino art songs, supported by a "deep bench" of talent from the University of Santo Tomas Conservatory of Music: sopranos Florence Aguilar and Monaliza Padilla, baritone Noel Azcona, and concert pianists-voice teachers Julie Mendoza and Najib Ismail.

Meanwhile, soprano Karla Gutierrez of the Philippine Opera Company (892-8786) has announced that the POC will mount Puccini's "La Boheme" in October next year, but will be holding open auditions as early as August this year, along with acting and dance workshops, master classes and stage movement. That production should be something to look forward to.



New self-help book on getting rich

A NEW SELF-HELP BOOK WITH A CATCHY and interesting title, "10 Sikreto ng mga Mayayaman Book 1 of 10" (English edition), by the prolific Filipino-American author Al Sembrano, is now available in leading bookstores and can be purchased online at www.Sikreto.com and www.Mayaman.com.

Book 1 will also be available for sale in an audio book compact-disc format, in English and Tagalog, in order to reach more Filipinos.

"'Book 1 of 10 Sikreto ng mga Mayayaman' is a realistic guide that empowers the Filipino to achieve enormous wealth and success by applying the personal inner secrets of the rich into one's life," Sembrano said.

Book 1 is the most important of the projected 10-book series since applying its 10 principles or "secrets" into "everyday living" will build the foundation for one's future success, the author added.

"This is also the first time that a self-help audio book in Tagalog will be available in the local and international market," Sembrano said.

"10 Sikreto ng mga Mayayaman Book 1 of 10" is published by Chelsey McCaw Publishing Inc. It sells at P495 at National Books Store, PowerBooks, Fully Booked, Filbars, Goodwill Bookstore, Bridges Bookstore, Books For Less, Popular Bookstore, Solidaridad Bookshop, Merriam-Websters and Central Bookstore.

Visit www.Sikreto.com and www.Mayaman.com. Call 7535315, 0922-9365252, 8103567 or 0918-9193454.

Sawikaan conference

FOREIGN DIPLOMATS ARE AMONG THE speakers in Sawikaan 2007: Word of the Year Conference to be held at Pulungang Recto, Bulwagang Rizal, College of Arts and Letters, University of the Philippines, Diliman, QC, on Aug. 2-3.

Ambassador Erendira Araceli Paz Campos and First Secretary Georges-Gaston Feydeau will discuss the linguistic and sociopolitical dynamics of the Mexican and French national languages.

Campos served as director general of the Department of United Nations until she assumed her current post in Manila in March 2005.

Feydeau is a cultural, consular, political, economic and military diplomacy expert. Since 2001, he is deputy to the Ambassador in the Philippines in charge of cultural workshops, conferences and consular networking. He has served directorship functions in Japan, Indonesia, Somalia and Great Britain. In the lecture, Alix Lavaud, the linguistic attache of the French Embassy, will assist Feydeau.

Insights gained by participants from the Mexican and French lectures are expected to broaden their language horizon, and hopefully also enrich the Filipino language advocacy.

UP president Emerlinda R. Roman will deliver the welcome remarks. Scholars Florentino Hornedo and Ruth Elynia Mabanglo will discuss the conference theme "Filipino as Global Language."

In the occasion of Sawikaan's fourth year, the book "Sawikaan 2006" (University of the Philippines Press, 2006) or the compilation of last year's papers will be launched on the first day with UP Diliman chancellor Sergio S. Cao as guest of honor. The illustrations used in the book, eye-catching prints designed by artist Pandi Aviado, will be exhibited in the venue's adjoining gallery.

Among this year's candidate words are "party list," "telenobela" and "miskol," chosen by the judges because they have an impact on national consciousness.

Other words considered are "videoke," "extrajudicial killing," "make over," "friendster," and "roro." Roro is short for roll on-roll off or the inter-island, cross-country transport system designed to spur national progress.

This year, four slots are reserved for the regional nominations, including Bicol's "oragon."

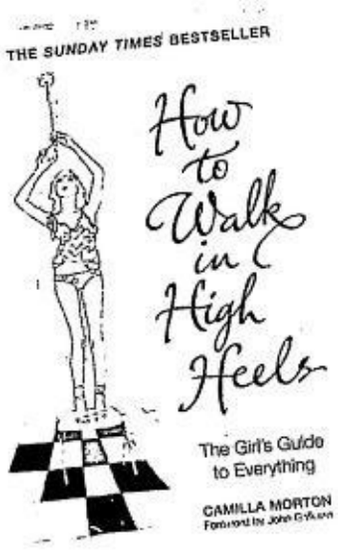
The conference is funded by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and Blas Ople Foundation, and spearheaded by the Filipinas Institute of Translation (FIT). Call 9244747 or 9221830; visit FIT, Rm. 2082, Bulwagang Rizal, College of Arts and Letters, UP Diliman; e-mail filipinas.translation@gmail.com.

Books for women

'How to Walk in High Heels'

by Camilla Morton

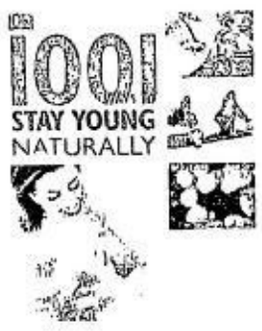
This book is a girl's guide to everything. Author Camilla Morton teaches women how to do everything with style and smarts—handling different social situations, tackling technophobia, reverse-parking, picking up doggie doo-doo with style, etc.



'1001 Ways to Stay Young Naturally'

by Susannah Marriott

Tempted by botox or a little surgical enhancement? Here are 1001 ways to say no and still look great naturally. This helpful guide includes tips on rejuvenating superfoods, simple steps to exercise, easy-to-make and 100-percent natural beauty treatments, anti-aging remedies, and smart ways to boost your immunity.



'Straight Talk with Gay Guys'

by Daylle Deanna Schwartz

Written by a relationship expert and author of the megahit "All Men are Jerks Until Proven Otherwise," this book gives you the real deal on how and why men think and act the way they do. And who better to tell you everything you need and want to know about the opposite sex than gay guys?

'Rethinking Thin'

by Gina Kolata

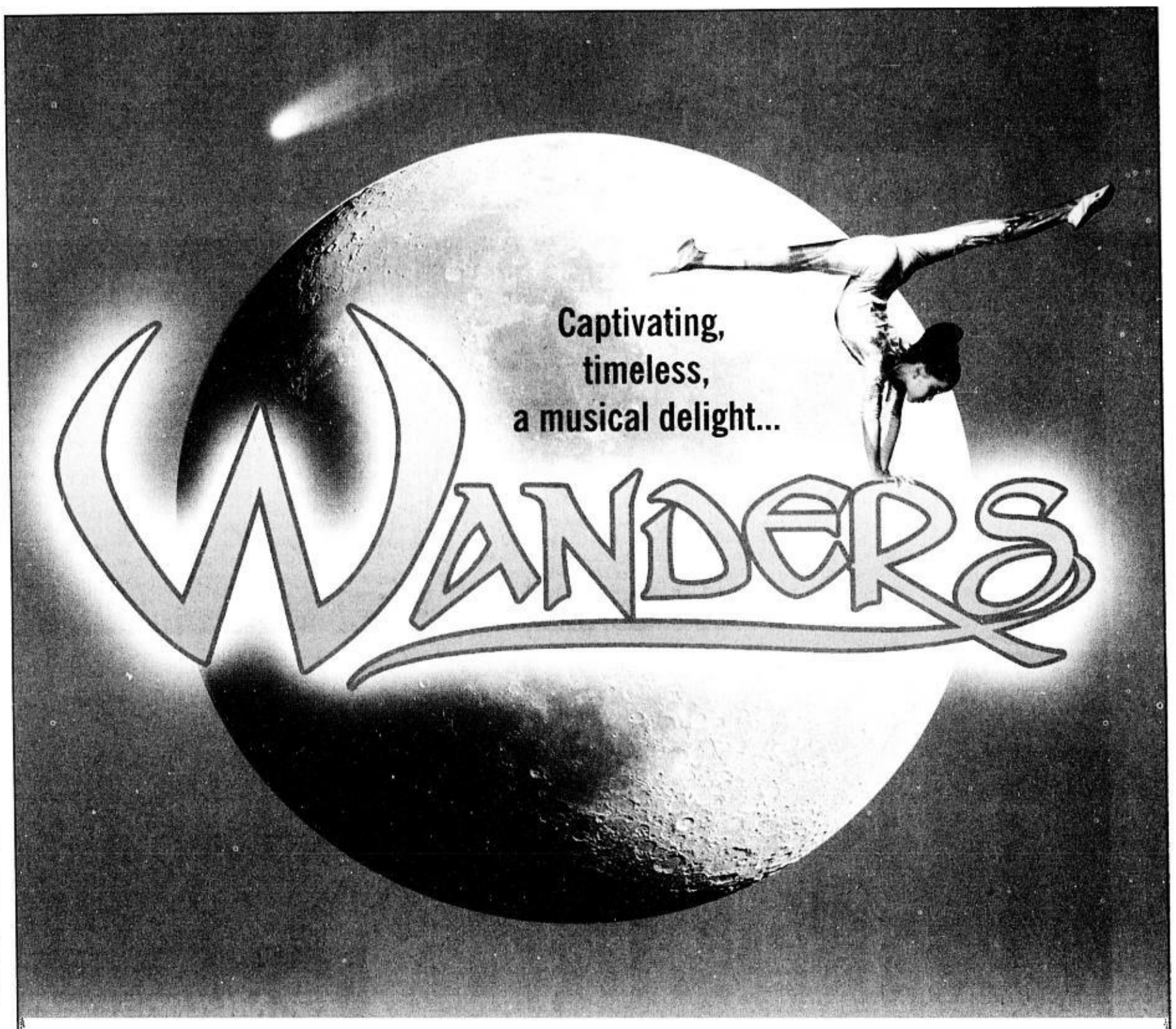
A lively and liberating challenge to the conventional wisdom about diets and weight loss. In this eye-opening book, New York Times science writer Gina Kolata shows that our society's obsession with dieting is less about keeping trim and staying healthy than about money, power, trends and impossible ideals.

'Law of Attraction'

by Michael J. Losier

You may not be aware of it, but a very powerful force is present in your life. It is called the Law of Attraction. Learn how to use it deliberately and make it work for you. Author Michael Losier's three-step program, complete with tips, tools, exercises and scripts, shows you how you can incorporate his proven practices into your life.

All titles are available at National Book Store.



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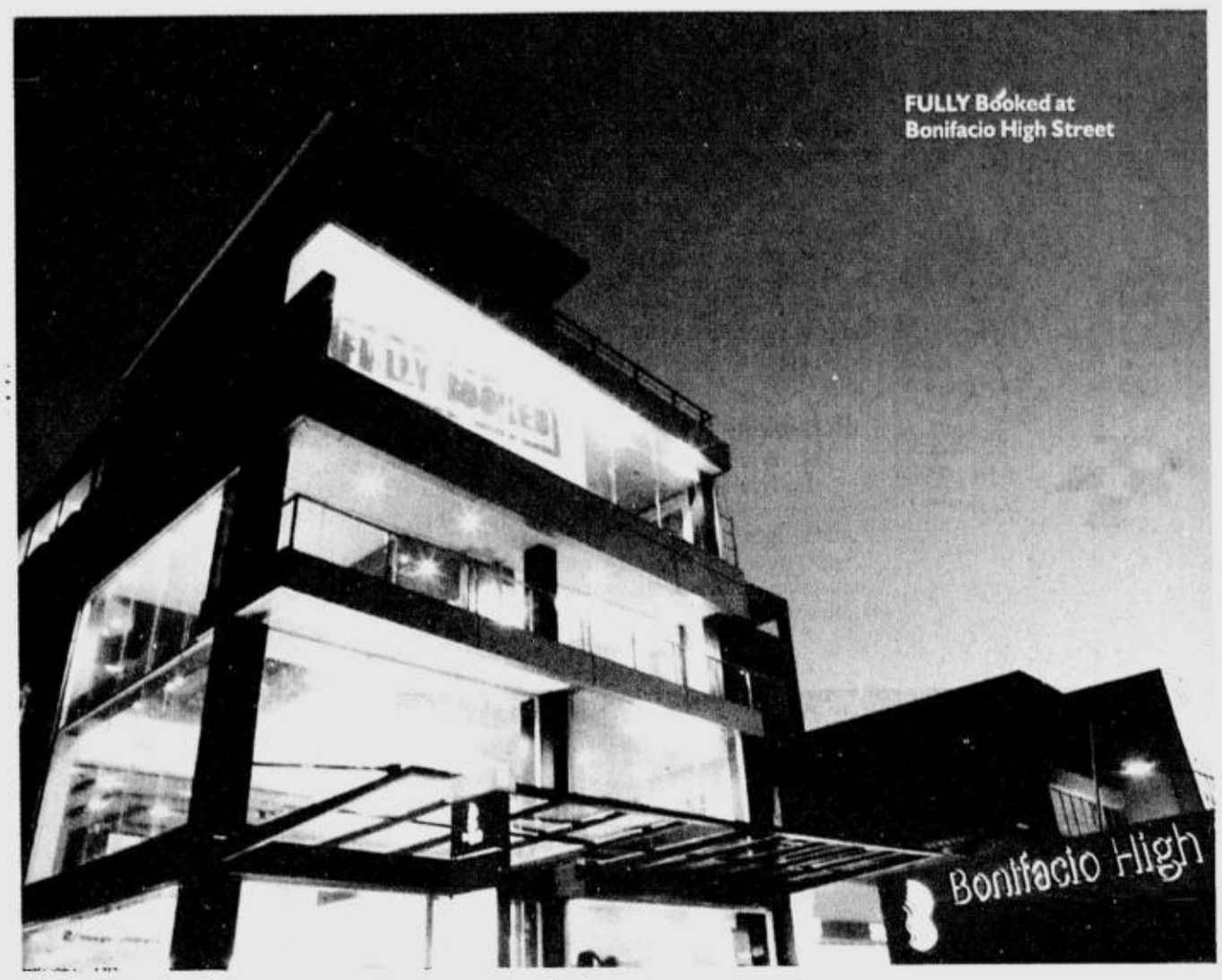


FULLY Booked at Bonifacio High Street

FULLY BOOKED IS NOW OPEN AT BONIfacio High Street. This 3,000 sqm, five-level flagship store houses a wide and diverse collection of books, CDs, DVDs, novelty items, stationery and school and office supplies. It also has a café, moviehouse and sunset lounge.

Fully Booked-Bonifacio High Street has sleek, stylish interiors with a skylight that illuminates five spacious floors.

There are 42-inch plasma screens on every floor showing books-come-alive videos that will bring simple book browsing into a more interactive level.

A mini playground awaits kids in the children's section.

The Forum, which is located on the fourth level, is an ideal space for launches, book signings, mini conferences, demos and other events.

It is also the only bookstore in the country with a Starbucks, which is situated on the third level.

A multi-sensory experience awaits customers at "U-View"—a fully functional movie theater with state-of-the-art sound system, 120-inch screen and 62 top-quality theater seats located at the basement.

The theater is open for private seminars and parties.

"The Deck," meanwhile, is a roof-deck venue open for corporate events and social functions.

Fully Booked's flagship store is at Bldg 6, 902 Bonifacio High Street, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, beside Serendra.

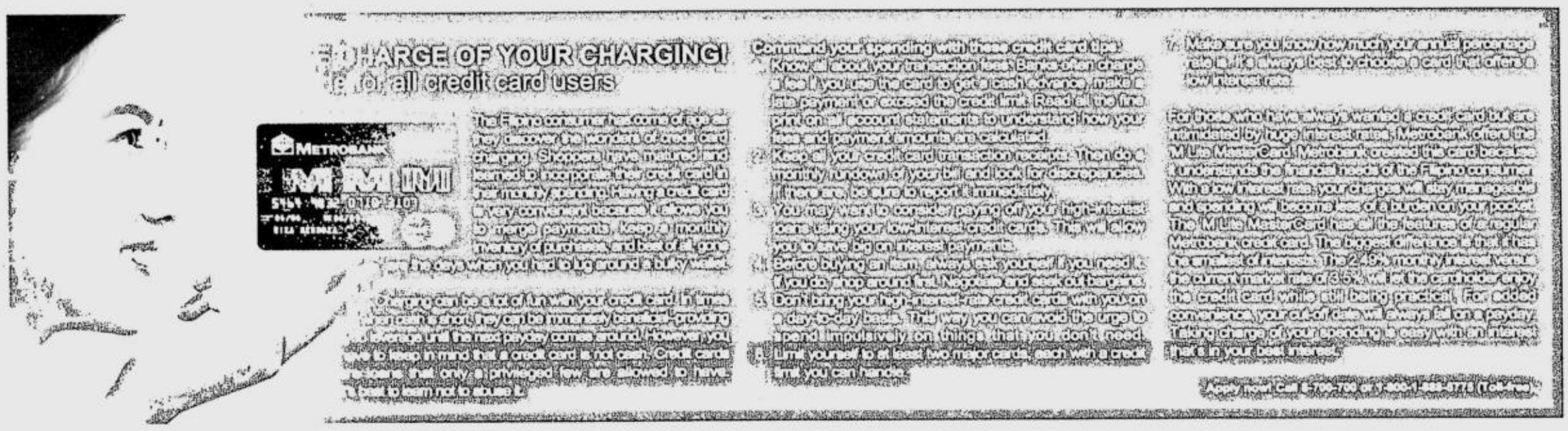
Docu video on marriage

"WALANG HANGGAN," THE latest documentary video from Jesuit Communications (JesCom), looks into the meaning and value of marriage.

With Fr. Ted Gonzales, SJ of the Center for Family Ministries as the main resource person and through the insights and experiences shared by the featured guests, this video aims to provide very practical pointers on how to take on the challenges that await every married couple.

Celebrity couples Johnny Delgado and Laurice Guillen, Julius and Christine Babao; and non-showbiz couples Mark and Lou Querubin and Rolando and Yvonne Mesina are only some of the many married men and women in our society who have walked different paths but have gained similar life-changing lessons and realizations through their journey.

"Walang Hanggan" is available in VCD at Tanging Yaman branches at the Ateneo de Manila, SM Megamall B and Gateway Mall. Call 4265971 to 72 loc. 113. Visit www.jesuits.ph/jescom.



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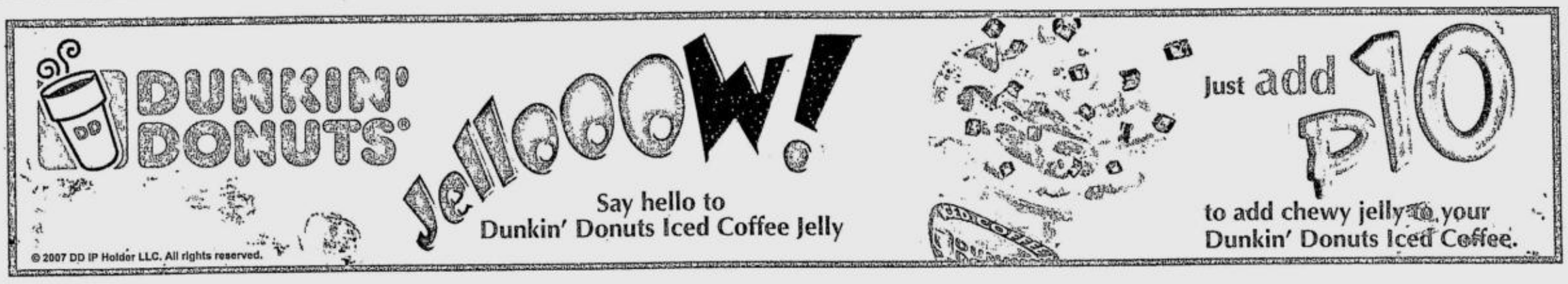


RYAN LIM

RETIRED BUT NOT RECLUSIVE
The inimitable singer-actress Celeste Legaspi at home, under her portrait done by youngest daughter Lala. "I'm retired; I can say what I want now," she warned before granting us an interview. She did. *Yesterday/ G4.*

Korea seeks co-producers

... in Vietnam, Mongolia, Indonesia, China and RP

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

CO-PRODUCTION IS key, a Koreanovela producer told his Filipino counterparts in a workshop held in Makati on July 20.

The "international co-production" workshop was spearheaded by the Korean Broadcasting Institute (KBI), in cooperation with the National Broadcasting Network (NBN), the Philippine government station.

Young-Jun Ryu, KBI director, told INQUIRER Entertainment that the Korean governmental organization is initiating co-productions with five Asian countries—Vietnam, Mongolia, Indonesia, China and the Philippines.

"Through workshops like this, we hope to share skills and ideas with our neighbors," he said, adding that the "similar cultures of Asian countries create a lot of opportunities for communication."

He said KBI's commitment was clear, noting that three top producers/directors from Korea were flown in to deliver lectures on production (Tae Won Kim), soap operas (Hyung Min Lee) and documentaries (Yong Don Lee).

The first speaker, Kim, was executive producer of the Koreanovela "Jumong," currently aired on GMA 7.

In explaining the historical soap opera's success throughout the region, the Korean producer said: "The passion of the actors, directors, writers, producers made the 'Korean wave' possible."

In more concrete terms, that "passion" could be seen in the time and effort his company poured on "Jumong," Kim said.

He related that two years was spent on pre-production, and one-and-a-half years on building the show's set, an ancient village. (He showed video of a mountain area being flattened prior to construction.)

'Jumong' fever

A toprater in Korea, "Jumong" has been sold to at least eight Asian countries—Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Vietnam, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines.

"Asia is the biggest market in the world," Kim asserted. "No other market is growing at the same pace."

KOREA/ F4

Writer Ross Celino's burial set tomorrow

By Marinel R. Cruz

JOSEPH "OTEP" GONZALES, WHO TOOK care of the ailing Ross Celino, remembers that before the veteran movie writer succumbed to heart failure on July 23 at age 78, "Tatay cried and thanked me for all my help."

Celino was also the main publicity and promotions officer of the late action king and presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr.

Gonzales is the brother of Celino's widowed daughter-in-law, Joyce.

Celino was rushed to the Philippine Heart Center in Quezon City more than a month ago after he suffered a stroke. Gonzales said a few days later, Celino fell down the stairs at home in Project 7, Quezon City.

Gonzales recounted: "He asked me to bring him back to the Heart Center for a check-up the

WRITER/ F4

HAPPY TRIO
Violinist John Lesaca, Immigration Commissioner Marcelo Libanan and singer Mitch Valdes just signed a great deal. *Page F3.*

All set for thrilla in 9th Cinemanila

By Constantino C. Tejero

TIKOY Aguiluz is not only an accomplished filmmaker, but also a dauntless film festival organizer. Despite the obstacles and debacles Cinemanila had to go through, the premier international film festival he founded is now in its ninth year (on Aug. 8-19). And, what do you know, it will be top-billed by Quentin Tarantino, no less.

Tarantino, who popularized the new violence in the movies, will be given the Lifetime Achievement Award during special ceremonies in the festival. Local moviegoers will crane their necks, gawk and gape to catch a glimpse of this international icon, for sure, but cineastes will be more interested in what this year's edition of the film fest has to offer.

We understand that Aguiluz personally picks the films that would be lined up for Cinemanila. This year, from the Cannes and Berlin film fests he got the latest Palm d'Or winner "4 Months, 3 Weeks & 2 Days" and the 2005 Golden Bear winner "U-Carmen eKhayelitsha." Also "Volver," Pedro Almodóvar's latest.

Buried gems

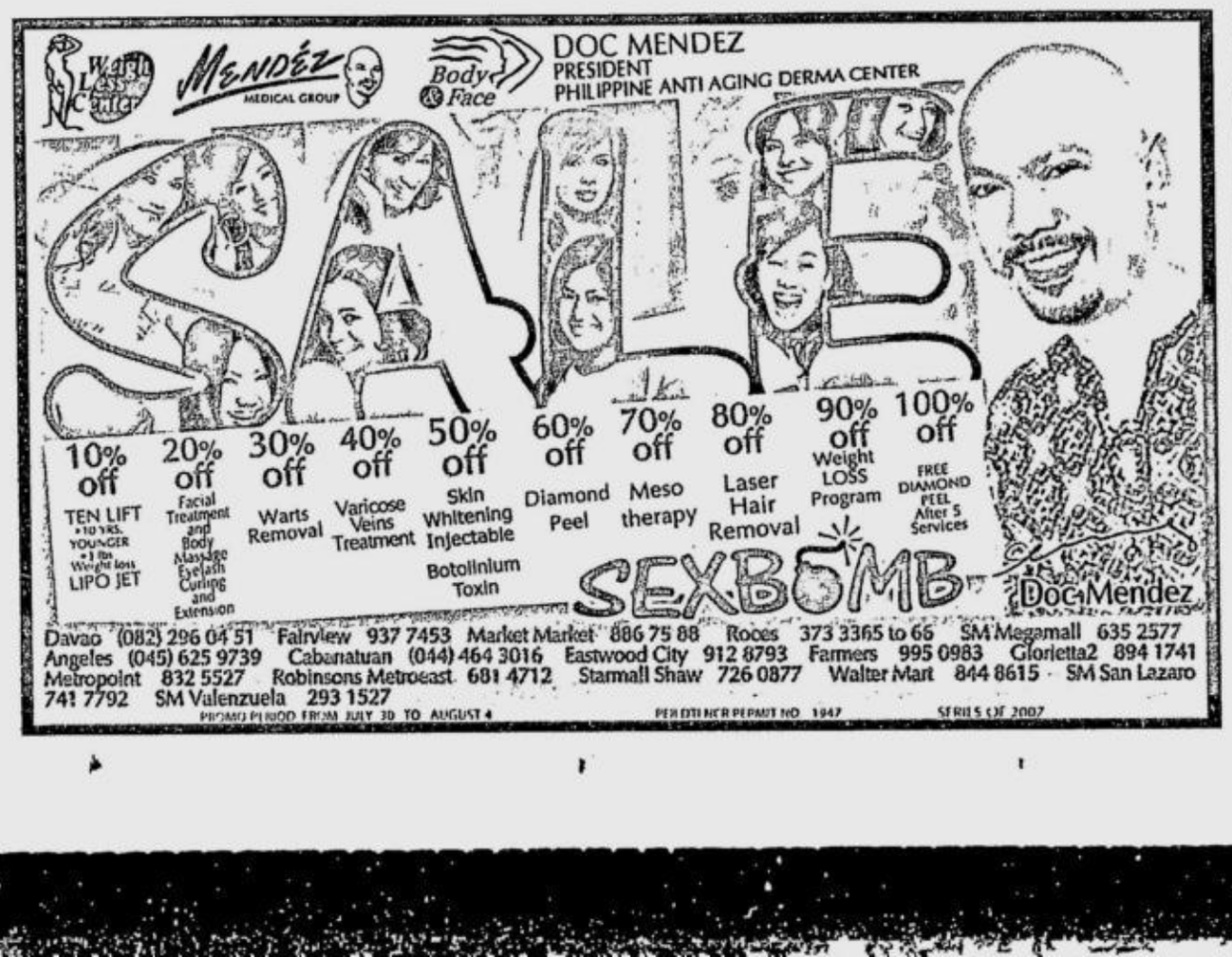
From experience, we also know that cinematic gems of near-unknown origins are buried in every edition of this fest.

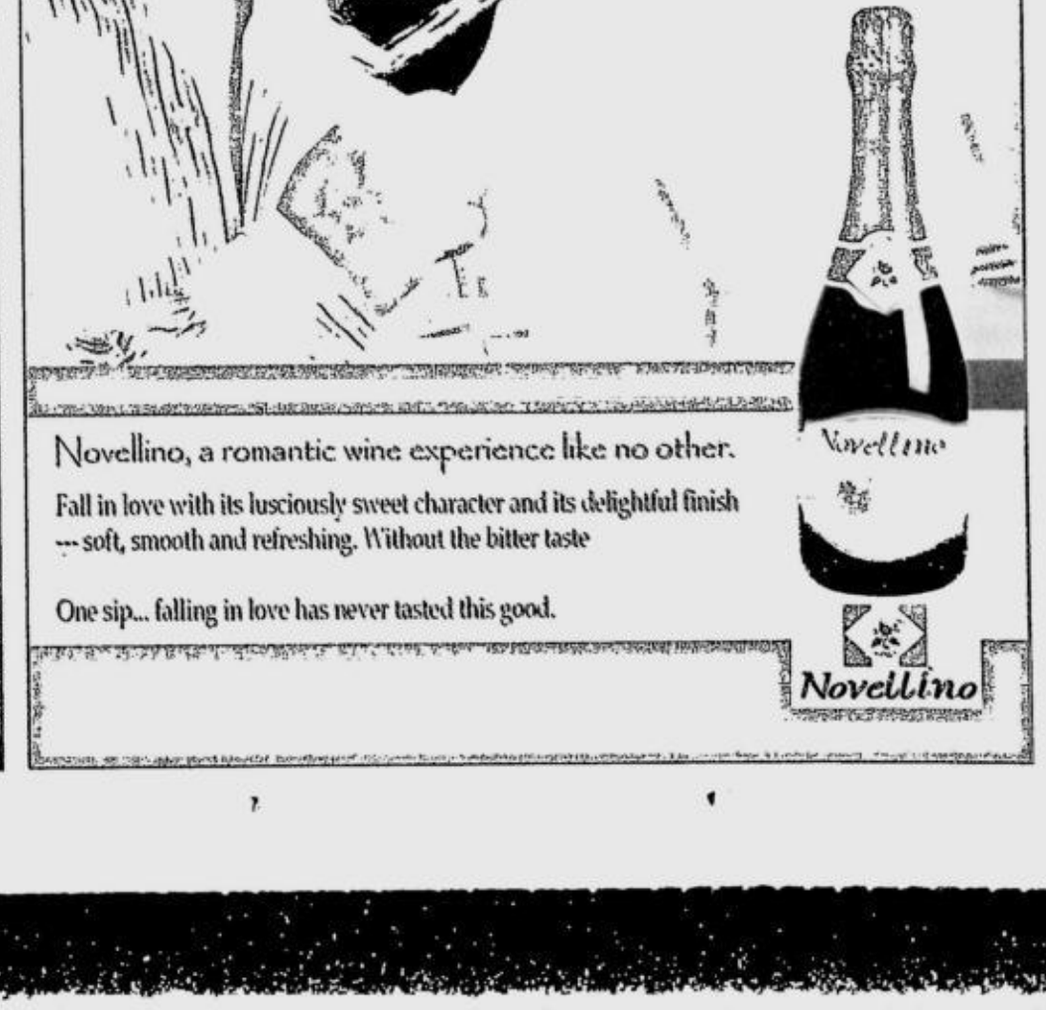
Then there is a special focus on films from Asean countries (opening section), Bollywood (Aug. 10), South Africa (Aug. 11) and Turkey (Aug. 12).

Another special section, for which our young filmmakers have so much to thank, is the Digital Lokal, started in 2005. It is unquestionably an impetus that opened the floodgate to digital filmmaking in the country. This year, the special competition will have as head of jury Olivier Pere, artistic director of the Directors Fortnight at Cannes.

The 9th Cinemanila International Film Festival is organized by the Independent Cinema of the Philippines, Film Development Council of the Philippines and a specially commissioned interagency committee.

We hope that, in the future, the organizers will include a section devoted to forgotten masterworks, such as Griffith's "Broken Blossoms," Pabst's "Pandora's Box" and Murnau's "Sunrise—A Song of Two Humans."





GARFIELD
BY JIM DAVIS

A. LIPIN
BY JESS ABRERA

BABY BLUES
BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY
BY P.M. JUNIOR

MUTTS
BY PATRICK McDONNELL

LOVEKNOTS
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO.

ATOMO AND WEBOY
BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY
BY STEVEN PABALINAS

KIKO MACHINE
BY MANIX ABRERA

MIKROKOSMOS
BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

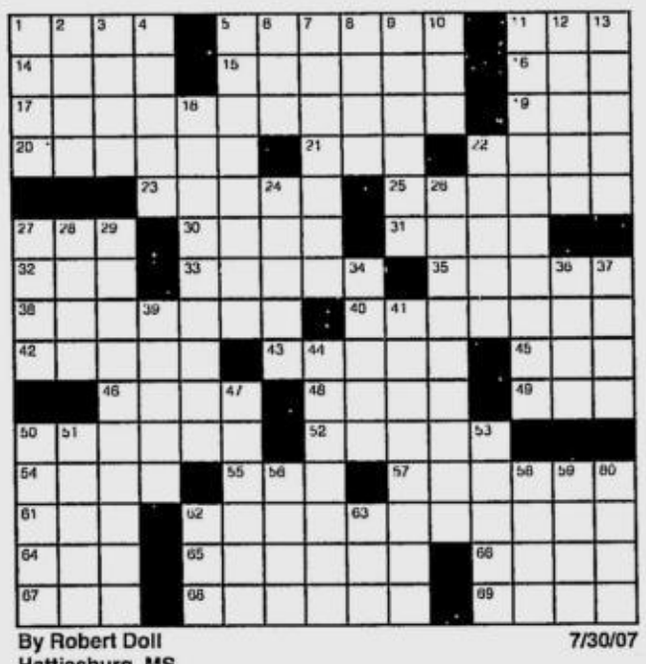
TULDOK
BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

BEN
BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Wan
5 Close-fitting dress
11 CD alternative
14 Tel __-Jaffa
15 Blanketlike cloak
16 Be in debt to
17 Warsaw voyeur?
19 Sought office
20 False name
21 You there!
22 Sale-tag notation
23 Brazilian dance in duple time
25 Turn around
27 Liturgical vestment
30 Inert gas
31 Thoroughly corrupt
32 Fa-la linkup
33 Mild expletive
35 Fairylike
38 Without profit
40 Roofed walkway
42 Burgundy wine
43 In that place
45 __ on your life!
46 Kin partner
48 Napoleon's isle of exile
49 Compass pt.
50 Edict
52 True up
54 Woodworker's tool
55 Rocky pinnacle
57 Small sack of leaves
61 Equal score
62 Mass in Riga?
64 List-ending abbr.
65 Dudley Moore film
66 Paradise
67 Quiet down!
68 Spurs on
69 __-majesty

DOWN
1 Hemingway's sobriquet
2 Stratford-on-__
3 "__ & Stitch"
4 Odds' alternative
5 E-mail abusers
6 Fiery
7 Cast a spell over
8 Painful throb
9 "__ Coming to Take Me Away, Ha, Haaa!"
10 Opp. of vertical
11 Back in Helsinki?
12 Expect
13 Keyed up
18 Suburb of Detroit
22 Like Pisa's tower
24 Glorify oneself
26 Too willing
27 Rush-job acronym
28 Lesotho currency
29 Dazed Bohemian?
34 Magic formula
36 Religious image
37 Post-it jotting
39 Longest river in France
41 Satellites
44 Fireplace floors
47 Different: pref.
50 Palm fruits
51 Archie's better half
53 Type of orange
56 Italian eight
58 Wait
59 Poker bullets
60 "The Ghost and Mrs. Muir" star Tierney
62 Trail behind
63 Take to court



By Robert Doll
Hattiesburg, MS
7/30/07

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

A	S	C	E	N	T	S		T	H	E	B	O	S	S
N	O	U	V	E	A	U		R	E	R	O	U	T	E
S	P	L	I	T	U	P		A	D	O	P	T	E	E
E	P	O	C	H			F	I	G	S		D	I	K
L	I	T	T	E	R	M	A	T	E		L	O	N	E
M	E	T		R	O	I	L	S		K	I	N	E	R
O	R	E		M	Y	R	A		S	N	E	E	R	S
			C	O	C	A		P	L	O	D			
D	E	B	A	S	E		C	H	I	C		A	L	P
A	V	E	R	T		S	L	I	C	K		T	E	A
M	A	T	T		W	H	O	L	E	S	A	L	E	S
A	C	T		G	O	O	D			O	M	A	R	S
G	U	E	V	A	R	A		R	E	V	E	R	I	E
E	E	R	I	E	S	T		A	V	E	N	G	E	R
D	E	S	A	L	T	S		W	A	R	D	E	R	S

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7/30/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're strong, confident and decisive. You approach life in a physical way. You're earthy, solid and sturdy, and you love new challenges. In your personal life, love is important, but not always easy. Your fantasies inspire you. You like sports, beauty pageants and modeling. As you age, spirituality becomes more important. This year, all kinds of new beginnings are possible. Open any door!
Birthdate of: Hilary Swank, actress; Arnold Schwarzenegger, actor/politician, Alton Brown, TV host/chef.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Don't be confused or deceived with groups or friends today. Make sure your sympathies are well-placed, or they will cost you money in some way

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Misplaced idealism about authority figures could cause you to feel disappointed today. If you're not sure about something, don't act. Stay light on your feet and flexible.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Your love of beauty and ideas might lead you astray today. It's OK to have your head in the clouds, as long as you have your feet firmly on the ground

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Be clear about transactions involving shared property or the wealth of others. Don't give away anything you do not own. (If you think something is fishy, it is.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You like to think the best of your friends. However, it's important to keep your eyes open. Avoid clashes with parents or bosses that might be building up.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): A co-worker or customer might arouse your sympathy today. If you can help someone, this is good. But remember: If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You feel confused about romance, the care of children, sports or the arts. If you don't have all your facts straight, tomorrow your hands will be tied.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You're sympathetic with family today. Enjoy these feelings, because warmth and trust today will help difficulties that might arise tomorrow with partners and spouses.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You feel friendly when talking to daily colleagues or siblings and relatives. Plus, your imagination is in overdrive. Expect to be daydreaming a lot.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Think carefully about all financial and business transactions today. However, if you have an opportunity to be charitable to someone who is needy, act on it.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You feel sympathetic and friendly toward others today. You appreciate what they have to deal with. You see that we are all more alike then we are not: Everyone wants to be happy; no one wants to suffer.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Your intuition and psychic abilities are heightened today. You're very tuned in to the feelings (especially the unhappiness) of others. Perhaps your kindness will make a difference to someone.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

1						3		8
			4			9		
			8	1		6	4	7
	6	4	2	7				
		1	3		5	7		
				4	1	8	9	
4	9	8		3	6			
		6			8			
5		2						6

Difficulty Level ★ 7/30

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

3	5	2	6	1	4	7	9	8
7	6	1	9	8	5	3	2	4
8	9	4	2	7	3	5	1	6
2	7	5	4	3	8	1	6	9
9	4	3	7	6	1	2	8	5
6	1	8	5	2	9	4	3	7
4	3	9	8	5	2	6	7	1
5	2	6	1	9	7	8	4	3
1	8	7	3	4	6	9	5	2

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

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Music artists get a boost

Foreign entertainers now have to get endorsements from local performers' guilds before mounting shows here

By Cora Lucas

WHEN FOREIGN ARTISTS COME TO THE Philippines, they give a token amount to the Organisasyon ng Pilipinong Mang-aawit (OPM), the official guild of local performing artists.

These token amounts help build a benefit fund for OPM members who are, in effect, sharing the market with these foreign acts.

Now, OPM and the Asosasyon ng Musikong Pilipino (AMP), an association of Filipino musicians, are getting something more.

OPM and AMP recently forged a Memorandum of Agreement with the Bureau of Immigration (BI) that would promote the Artists' Equity Program. This requires foreign performers to secure endorsements from the OPM and AMP before they can be issued working permits by the bureau.

Level field

This, OPM president Mitch Valdes says, should level the playing field.

"We do not have any [quarrel] with foreign artists," explains Valdes of the agreement, which she signed with AMP vice chairman John Lesaca and BI Commissioner Marcelo Libanan. "While we promote Filipino performers, we also encourage foreign artists to come and share their talents—subject to immigration policies and local labor laws."

Valdes, who has been working to safeguard the rights of local performers, has taken exception to the unequal distribution of sponsors' budgets. Foreign acts get the bigger portion, and more easily.

"When Filipinos perform abroad, we observe parallel Equity procedures," Valdes says. "Filipino concert artists and their producers should be assured of a working environment that promotes their artistry as well as their business interests."

Staunch ally

Valdes notes the OPM found an ally in the Immigration Commissioner, himself a guitarist-musician (who has released a CD-album entitled "Nonoy Libanan Music from the Heart").

Libanan supported the singers and musicians' move to coordinate with local and foreign producers intending to bring in foreign singers, instrumentalists, backup vocalists and bands to the country.

"He has unequivocally declared that no foreign music artist may work in the Philippines without clearance from both OPM and AMP," says Valdes.

The singer sees the agreement as "an important step in protecting Filipino performing artists' rights and welfare in the wake of a renewed influx of foreign performers to the disadvantage of local artists."

The OPM, which has been making inroads in its war against music piracy, has been duly recognized as the only United Nations-associated artists' organization in the Asia-Pacific for its works on the Millenium Development Goals Through Music.

Agenda

It was recently conferred the 2007 Dangal ng Haraya Lifetime Achievement Award for Cultural Promotions by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA).

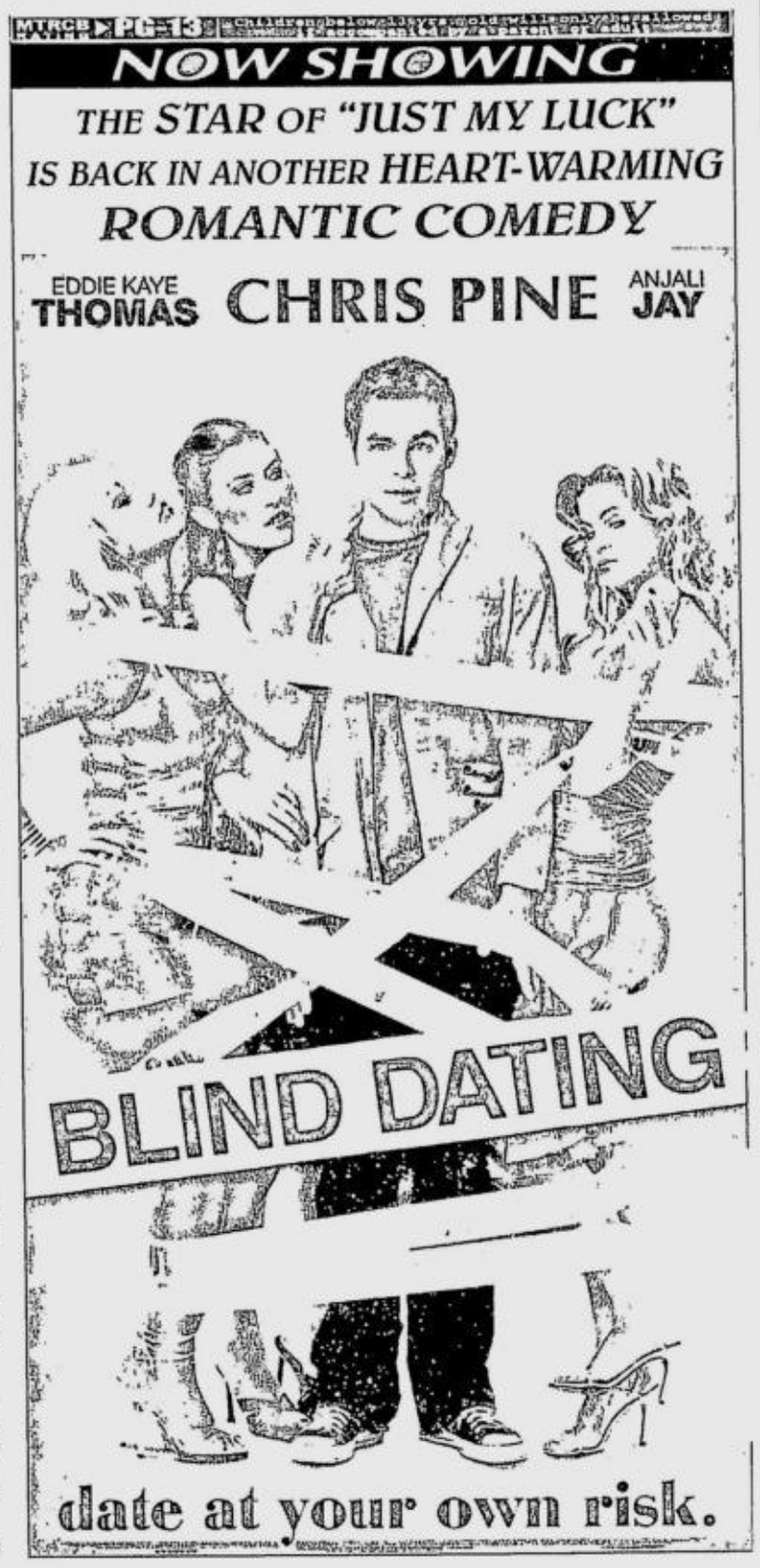
Currently on top of the organization's agenda is an omnibus Registry of Filipino Performing Artists and their Works, an online database project that may be accessed at www.philmusicregistry.net or www.opm.org.ph.

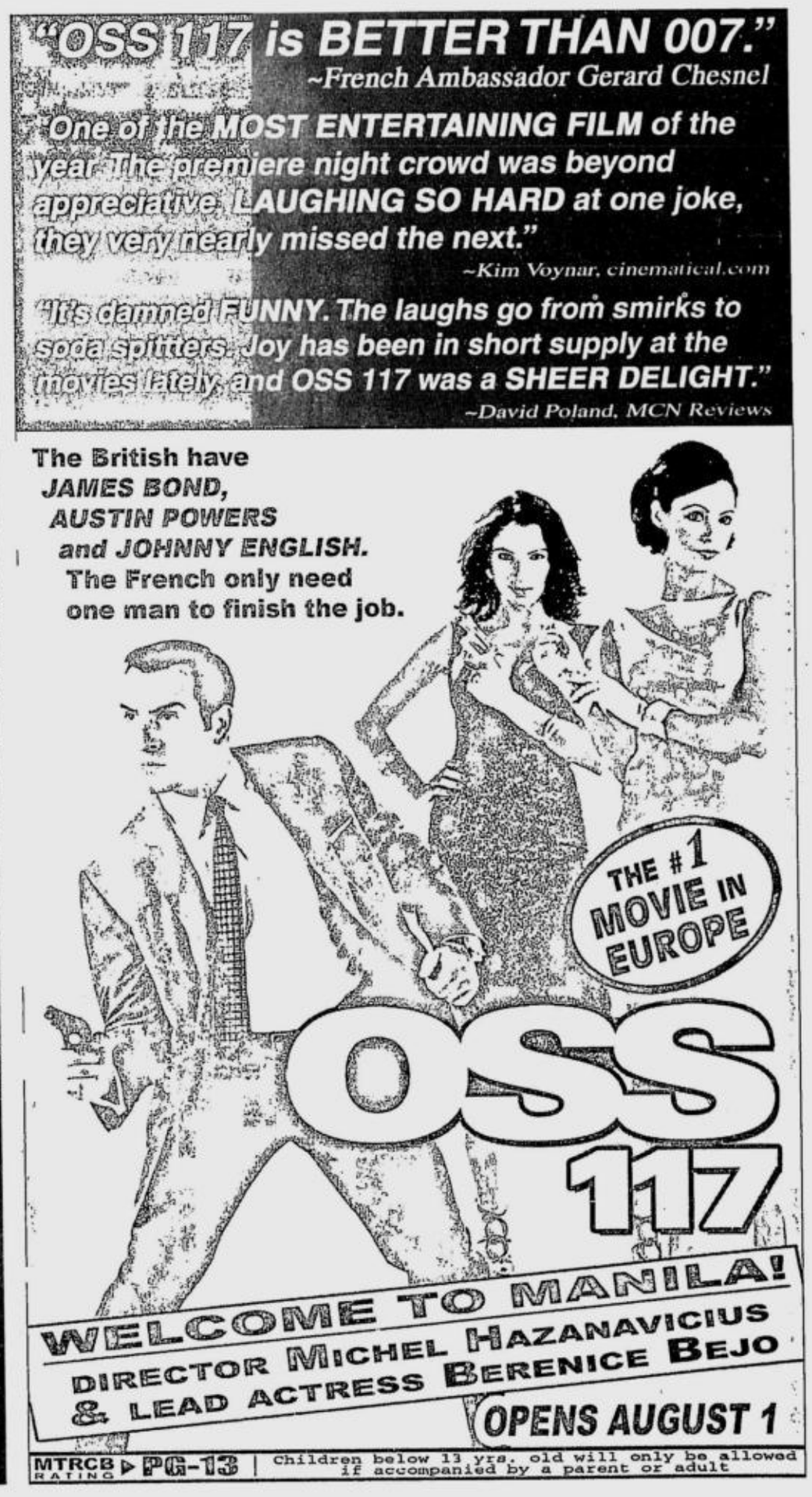
CHEER FACTOR

Arnold is 60

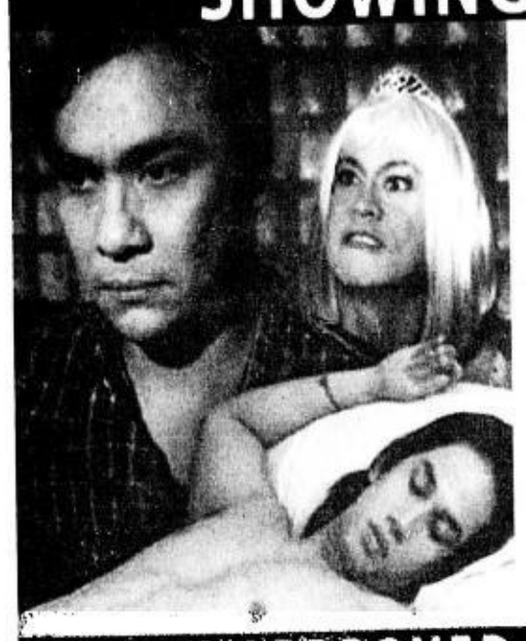
LOS ANGELES—Arnold Schwarzenegger, who once flexed his muscles as Mr. Universe and as an action-film hero, turns 60 today as the respected and popular governor of the most-populous American state.

Schwarzenegger's spokesman refused to say how the "governator" of California would celebrate his 60th birthday, when he will join President George W. Bush and former president Bill Clinton in the sexagenarian club. *AFP*





SHOWING TODAY !



Felino Tañada's
HANGGANG DITO NA LAMANG AT MARAMING SALAMAT PO

This is the film adaptation of Orlando Nadres' breakthrough play about homosexuality, starring Nonie Buencamino as a repressed pawnshop owner, Jon Santos, as the town's beautician, and Jerwin Mercado as the man that will change their lives forever.

indieSine

R-18! APPROVED WITHOUT CUTS!

WITH his wife Thelma, L, and Susan Roces

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ROY MARTINEZ

ROSS Celino loved show biz, and it loved him back. He is shown in these photos with some of his favorite prople in the industry. Above, from L, Aster Amoyo, his very good friend FPJ, and former president Joseph Estrada.

Writer Ross Celino's . . .

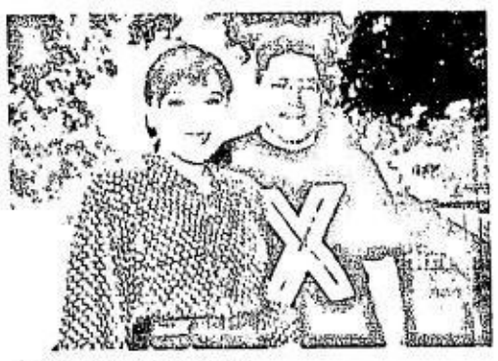
From page F1

day after the accident. His doctor said Tatay was well. We proceeded to the barber shop and had his hair colored and nails cleaned."

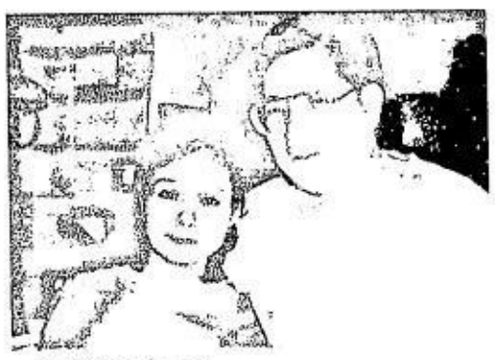
Celino was always impeccably groomed.

About four days later, Celino fainted and thereafter had difficulty maintaining his balance and urinating. He also had problems with his eyesight. "We took him to the Heart Center again," said Joyce. "We didn't know he was having another stroke at the time."

THE PUBLICIST-writer was a natty dresser



WITH Sharon Cuneta...



... and Nora Aunor.

Medical reports said Celino's kidneys shut down a day after he was taken to the hospital.

Celino was a diabetic, added Joyce. He was in the hospital for a month and two weeks. While there, he developed pneumonia.

"We miss him already," said Joyce. "We're used to seeing him having coffee while reading his newspapers in the morning, or sweeping the yard."

Retired

Celino had quadruple bypass surgery in 1999. Four years ago, he retired altogether and went to live with his wife in Bolinao, Pangasinan.

For decades, Celino contributed movie stories to newspapers like People's Journal, People's Tonight, Balita, Manila Times, Remate; and fan magazines like Modern Romances, Movie Star and Sosyal.

As FPJ's PR man, Celino's last projects were "Isang Bala Ka Lang 2" featuring FPJ with Jenine Desiderio and "Hagedorn" with Sharmaine Arnaiz. He actively participated in the actor's 2004 presidential campaign.

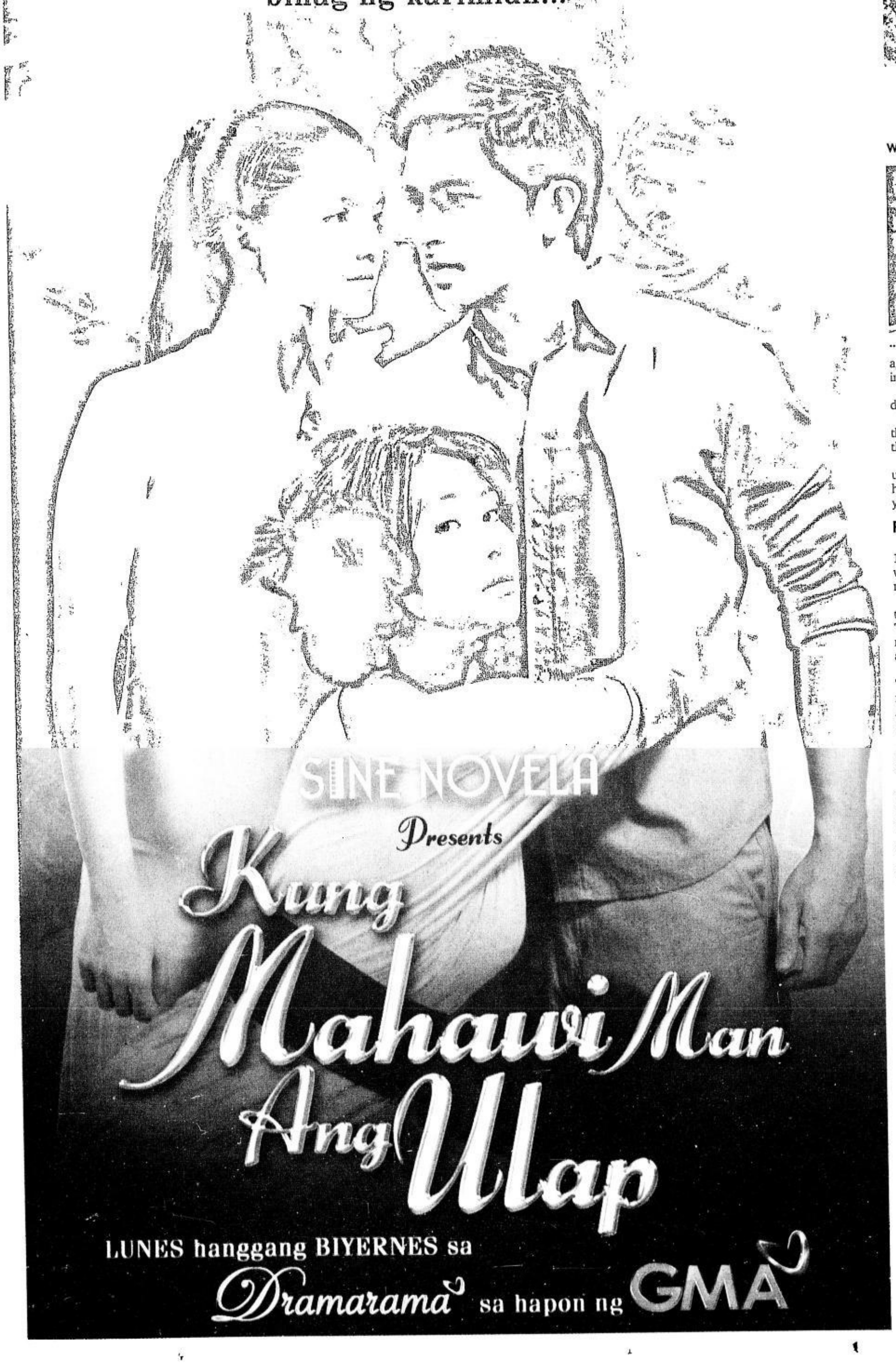
More than an employee and consultant, Celino was a friend and confidant to Poe, and in fact started working with Fernando Sr.

Celino's remains lie at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapel in Sucat, Parañaque City. Interment is set tomorrow at the Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque, after the 8 p.m. Mass.

He is survived by wife Thelma; children Katambayan, Jonathan and Bulette; grandchildren Karl, Kit, Ken, Jay-jay, Jessica, Dondon, VJ, Valeria, Chuckie, Chamie and Chalie.

MAMAYA NA!

Muling buksan ang pusong bihag ng karimlan...



LUNES hanggang BIYERNES sa
Dramarama sa hapon ng GMA

Korea seeks co-producers

From page F1

However, he conceded that "Hollywood is staging a comeback." That was why, he said, it was necessary "for Asians to make the market grow bigger."

He said that could be achieved only "if Asian countries cooperate with one another."

He outlined three strategies: 1) co-productions; 2) workshops/interactions among artists and producers; and 3) use/sharing of locations and sets in different countries.

He said there was an urgent need for more research, as well, "to find out what Asia wants to watch."

From Manila, Kim's next stop is China. "I am visiting the Shaolin Temple. I want to find out what makes this martial art famous all over the world," he said.

That's another rich source of story ideas that could appeal to a wide audience, Kim said. "Stories on martial arts, history, even natural calamities, can show the human spirit overcoming suffering."

E-mail: entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

ENTERTAINMENT

Text us your feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

And now, mobile TV

But first you've got to have the phone

By Pocholo Concepcion
Contributor

WATCHING TV HAS BEcome very "handy," indeed; it can now be done via cell phone.

Hundreds of guests turned up on Thursday at the NBC Tent to witness the launch of myTV—which connects real-time and digital-quality TV broadcast to post-paid and prepaid subscribers of Smart.

myTV is the first mobile service to offer TV shows using a digital broadcast signal.

The catch

It's like having a miniature TV in your hands.

But here's the catch: You must have the Nokia N92 mobile phone model (given for free if you avail of the P1,800 post-paid subscription plan), and pay an additional P488 a month.

Prepaid subscribers who have the Nokia N92 must maintain at least P489 airtime load every month.

Currently there are 11 channels being broadcast on myTV: entertainment (ETC, Jack TV, MTV, Pinoy Box Office, Cartoon Network), sports (Basketball TV, Solar Sports and the upcoming season of the PBA), news (CNN), documentary (National Geographic) and The History Channel.

At the launch, Smart chair Manny Pangilinan, wearing trendy tattered jeans, hobnobbed with guests, drank wine and thanked his lieutenants for achieving another "first" in innovative telecom service.

On opposite sides of the NBC Tent, six scenarios illustrated how best to enjoy myTV:

- A guy doesn't mind sitting alone in an outdoor café.
- A woman doesn't feel bad that her bedroom has no TV.
- Golf buddies find something more to do on the greens.
- A couple is oblivious to being stuck in traffic.
- Another couple is not bored while tanning on the beach.
- Still another couple doesn't mind waiting at the bus stop.

Uh-oh. What about snatchers?

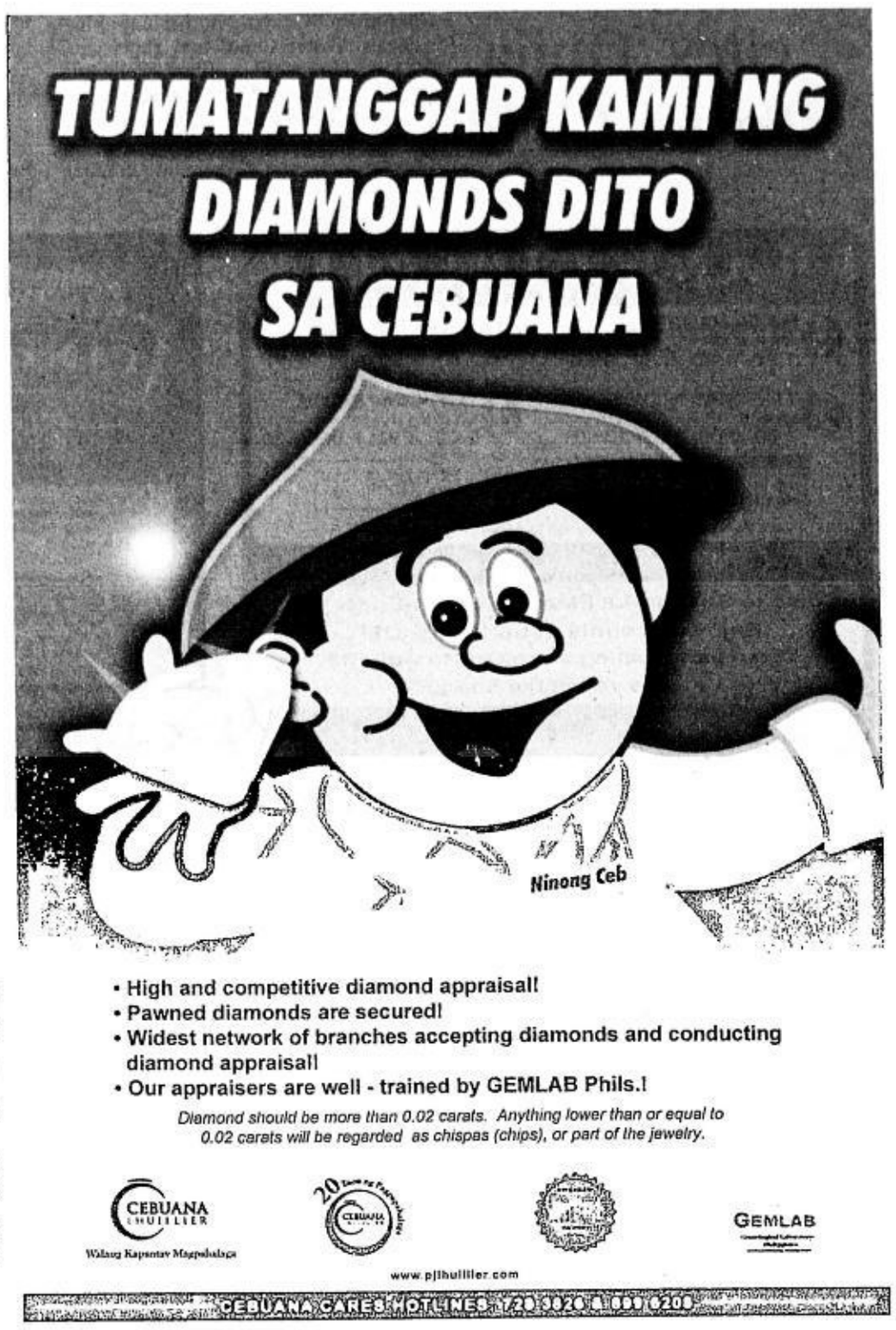
Another cause for concern is the small screen, which makes certain programs difficult to appreciate, for example, visually detailed scenes in National Geographic.

Even so, myTV is being hyped as "the next must-have" gadget.

Initially, myTV is available in Metro Manila (extending to the North and South Luzon Expressway), Cebu, Davao, Tagaytay, Batangas and Baguio City, with Boracay and Cagayan de Oro soon on its coverage.

Free trial is offered till Aug. 31.

RIZZA Santos, Jennifer Lee, Maui Taylor (partly hidden) myTV Managing Director Raymund Miranda, PLDT Chair and CEO Manny Pangilinan, Desiree del Valle



Komiks for OFWs

OF FIVE NEW *KOMIKS* TITLES set to hit the streets this September, two are tailored for a special-interest market each.

Super Funny Komiks, apparently loaded with humorous stories, wants to attract young readers. On the first issue's cover is a sci-fi character named *Gagambino*. It has a coloring book section, as well as a staff of big-name *komiks* writers, including Nerissa Cabral and Elena Patron.

OFW Super Stories targets homesick *Pinoys* abroad. The cover shown here promotes the banner story titled, "Andres de Saya (Chairman ng mga Takusa)." The question is whether graphic illustrations showing some skin, such as women's legs, would be allowed entry in the Middle East.

Declared virtually dead several years ago with the closure of the leading publisher, Atlas, the *komiks* got a new lease on life through the combined efforts of the National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and famed komiks novelist Carlo J. Caparas, who negotiated with a new publisher, Sterling, for the initial release of the five new *komiks* titles.

"*Maraming matutulungan ang industriya ng komiks,*" said Joe Lad Santos, NCCA commissioner and founder of the Filipino Institute of Komiks, Arts and Sciences. Those who stand to benefit from *komiks* sales are the writers, artists, publishers, printers, advertisers and their employees, all the way down to the vendors."

The other three titles are Tagalog Komiks, Gwapo Komiks and Pilipino Klasiks.

Each title costs P10 per issue. *Pocholo Concepcion, Contributor*

MTRCB ▷ PG-13

Ratings board cites 'Ouija,' 'Foster Child'

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE CINEMA EVALUATION BOARD has given "A" ratings to Brillante Mendoza's "Foster Child" and Topel Lee's "Ouija" because of the films' "well-crafted scripts" and "skillful editing."

"Both were good stories well told," CEB chair Christine Dayrit told INQUIRER Entertainment on Wednesday. An "A" rating entitles the film to a 100-percent tax rebate.

Dayrit said Lee's "very sensitive directing" earned the nod of the board members. She said actress Iza Calzado "is always effective in horror films, although all of them gave stellar performances."

Comedian Eugene Domingo "is a revelation," added Dayrit. "But everyone [was good], including veteran actresses Perla Bautista and Anita Linda."

Dayrit also described as outstanding the film's technical design and underwater photography. "The musical scoring is excellent, too. *Tamang tama lang*."

In "Ouija," Judy Ann Santos and Jolina Magdangal play half sisters who went to Camiguin—along with their cousins played by Calzado and Rhian Ramos—to bury their grandmother. The chilling story starts when the two call on the spirits of the dead.

Dayrit said Mendoza's film, on the other hand, has a "beautifully thought of script. It is very informative."

Lead actress Cherry Pie Picache rendered a "brilliant performance" for her role as Thelma, a foster mother who receives P1,500 monthly from the government for every child placed in her care.

"Foster Child" was featured in the Director's Fortnight section at the last Cannes International Film Festival.

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 RATATOUILLE MTRCB. GP 1:30, 4:10, 6:50, 9:30
3 RATATOUILLE MTRCB. GP 1:00, 3:40, 6:20, 9:00
2 THE SIMPSONS MTRCB. PG-13 12:00 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
4 THE SIMPSONS MTRCB: PG-13 2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30
PREMIERE THEATRE HARRY POTTER: 5 MTRCB: GP 2:30, 5:30, 8:30

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice.

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1 RATATOUILLE 2:10, 4:50, 7:30, 10:10 G
2 THE SIMPSONS 12:50, 3:20, 5:50, 8:20, 10:50 PG-13
3 RATATOUILLE 12:10, 2:50, 5:30, 8:10, 10:50 G
4 HARRY POTTER 2:10, 5:05, 8:00, 10:55 G

LED ZEP REISSUE

After years of reluctance, surviving members of the Led Zeppelin (the band is shown here in an undated photograph) are reissuing their only live album, "The Song Remains the Same," originally released on vinyl and celluloid in 1976. The new package will come out in the United States on Nov. 20 this year.

REUTERS

POWER PLANT CINEMA
ROCKWELL CENTER, MAKATI TEL: 898-1440/41
DOLBY DIGITAL

HARRY POTTER AND THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX G 1:00,4:00,7:00,10:00	THE SIMPSONS MOVIE – PG 13 12:30,2:30, 4:30,6:30,8:30	THE SIMPSONS MOVIE – PG13 1:30,3:30, 5:30,7:30,9:30
RATATOUILLE – G 1:30,4:00,6:30,9:00	BLIND DATING – PG13 1:30,3:40, 5:50,8:00,10:10	RATATOUILLE – G 12:00,2:30,5:00, 7:30,10:00

MOVIES & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

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NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 1 QUIJA 10:30, 12:50, 3:10 5:30, 7:50, 10:10 PG - 13
CINEMA 2 BLIND DATING 11:00, 1:20, 3:40, 6:00, 8:20, 10:35 PG-13
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
PROMENADE GREENHILLS
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All-covers

6CYCLEMIND'S ALbum, "Home" (Sony BMG), contains covers that have struck a chord in the band members' lives.

Its third song is "Dinamayan," a remake of the Cocojam original.

6CYCLEMIND

Different sound

Fans are bound to hear a different sound in the new Cueshe song, "Pasensya Na," a track from its second album "Back To Me" (Sony BMG).

The video of "Pasensya Na," done in black and white, is reminiscent of period films featuring costumes and a grand production design.

SPIN

CUESHE

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	4 BLIND DATING	5 DIE HARD 4.0	6 THE SIMPSONS	7 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX
GREENBELT 1	1 TRANSFORMERS	2 THE SIMPSONS		
GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE SIMPSONS GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX RATATOUILLE GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX GUARANTEED SEATS	4 BLIND DATING / RATATOUILLE GUARANTEED SEATS	5 THE SIMPSONS GUARANTEED SEATS	
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	3 THE SIMPSONS	4 THE SIMPSONS	5 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 THE SIMPSONS	2 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	3 RATATOUILLE	4 OUIJA
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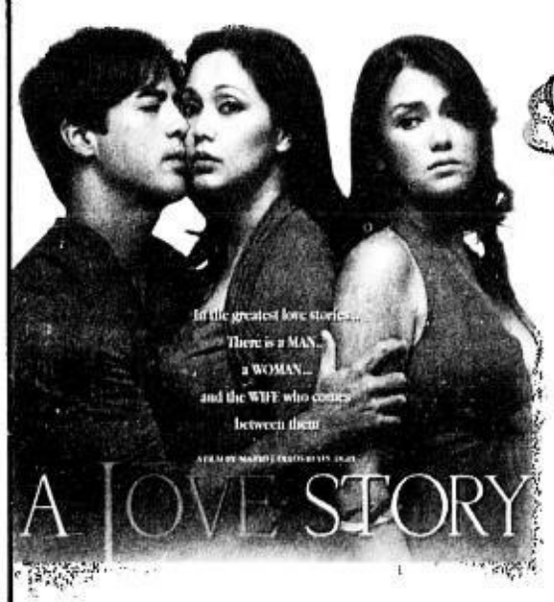

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DID YOU KNOW...

NICOLE RICHIE

Unruly celebs

SOCIALITE NICOLE Richie was sentenced on Friday to four days in jail for driving under the influence of drugs. Following are some recent sentences for celebrities who have run afoul of the law in the United States.

PARIS HILTON

• Paris Hilton, hotel heiress, served 23 days in jail in California's Los Angeles County in June for violating probation of an alcohol-related driving incident.

• Naomi Campbell, fashion model, spent five days community service mopping floors and cleaning toilets at a New York garbage depot in March after pleading guilty to assaulting a housekeeper.

MEL GIBSON

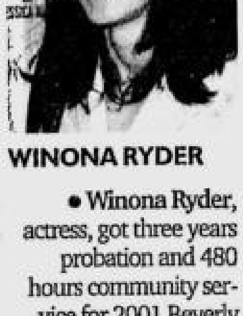
• Mel Gibson, actor/director, sentenced to three years probation, one-year mandatory alcohol-rehabilitation program for July 2006 drunken driving conviction.

• Martha Stewart, US home guru, served five months in prison in 2005 for lying to investigators about a stock trade.

• Nick Nolte, actor, was given three years probation and 90 days drug rehabilitation for driving under influence of drugs in 2002.

• Boy George, British pop singer, sentenced to five days community service in 2006 sweeping streets in New York for falsely reporting a burglary.

• Courtney Love, singer, got three years probation and six months mandatory drug rehabilitation for various drug and assault charges in 2005.



WINONA RYDER

• Winona Ryder, actress, got three years probation and 480 hours community service for 2001 Beverly Hills, California, shoplifting case.

• Robert Downey Jr., actor, served one year in prison in 1999 for cocaine possession.

Reuters

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7 RATATOUILLE
8 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN
9 DIE HARD 4
10 BLIND DATING
11 HARRY POTTER 5
12 OUIJA

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2 RATATOUILLE
3 HARRY POTTER 5
4 TRANSFORMERS
5 VACANCY
6 RATATOUILLE
7 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN
8 OUIJA
9 THE SIMPSONS
10 OUIJA
11 DIE HARD 4
12 BLIND DATING

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 BLIND DATING
2 OUIJA
3 WHITE NOISE
4 HARRY POTTER 5
5 DIE HARD 4
6 THE SIMPSONS
7 OUIJA
8 RATATOUILLE
9 TRANSFORMERS
10 VACANCY
11 PLANET TERROR
12 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 TRANSFORMERS
3 RATATOUILLE
4 THE SIMPSONS
5 OUIJA
6 PLANET TERROR
7 DIE HARD 4
8 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN
9 BLIND DATING
10 VACANCY

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
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2 TRANSFORMERS
3 HARRY POTTER 5
4 THE SIMPSONS
5 BLIND DATING
6 OUIJA

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888
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2 OUIJA
3 OUIJA
4 RATATOUILLE
5 TRANSFORMERS
6 HARRY POTTER 5
7 BLIND DATING
8 DIE HARD 4
9 VACANCY

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2 THE SIMPSONS
3 OUIJA
4 RATATOUILLE

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2 BLIND DATING
3 RATATOUILLE
4 DIE HARD 4
5 THE SIMPSONS
6 HARRY POTTER 5
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9 OUIJA
10 HARRY POTTER 5
11 TIYANAKS
12 VACANCY

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1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 THE SIMPSONS
3 RATATOUILLE
4 OUIJA

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
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2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 OUIJA
4 RATATOUILLE

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"Fast, light, frequently funny comedy" The New York Times

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Blades of Glory is a comedic farce that takes on the world of figure skating. The film stars Will Ferrel (*Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby*) as Chazz Michaels and Jon Heder (*Benchwarmers*) as Jimmy MacElroy, two competitive figure skaters who, banned from competing in the men's single competition a few years back, are convinced to compete in the pairs skating category - with each other!

Watch how Chazz and Jimmy pull it off and win the coveted championship on AUGUST 8 exclusively at your favorite SM Cinemas.

MTRCB Rating: PG-13

Special Thanks to: Mang 'n Tall, SM Skating Rink

OPENS AUGUST 8

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2 HARRY POTTER
3 RATATOUILLE
4 OUIJA
5 OUIJA
6 TRANSFORMERS
7 DIE HARD 4
8 BLIND DATING

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
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2 THE SIMPSONS
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 RATATOUILLE
5 OUIJA
6 DIE HARD 4/ OUIJA

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 OUIJA
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 RATATOUILLE

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 RATATOUILLE
2 OUIJA
3 HARRY POTTER 5
4 ZODIAC

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85
1 OUIJA
2 OUIJA
3 HARRY POTTER 5
4 RATATOUILLE
5 THE SIMPSONS
6 OUIJA

SM CIY LIPA (043) 784-0187
1 RATATOUILLE
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 OUIJA
4 TRANSFORMERS

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 OUIJA
2 RATATOUILLE
3 THE SIMPSONS
4 HARRY POTTER 5

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
1 OUIJA
2 THE SIMPSONS
3 RATATOUILLE
4 HARRY POTTER 5

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 OUIJA
3 THE SIMPSONS
4 RATATOUILLE

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5349811
1 THE SIMPSONS
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 RATATOUILLE
4 OUIJA

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 BORDERTOWN
3 OUIJA
4 DIE HARD 4
5 THE SIMPSONS
6 RATATOUILLE

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 RATATOUILLE
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 THE SIMPSONS
4 OUIJA

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 RATATOUILLE
2 ZODIAC
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 OUIJA
5 HARRY POTTER 5
6 THE SIMPSONS
7 RESERVED
8 DIE HARD 4

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 TRANSFORMERS
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 RATATOUILLE
4 THE SIMPSONS
5 OUIJA
6 NEXT
7 OUIJA
8 DIE HARD 4

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010
1 RATATOUILLE
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 THE SIMPSONS
4 OUIJA

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1 HARRY POTTER 5 • THX
1:30 4:10 6:50

2 OUIJA
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

3 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
11:00 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

4 DIE HARD 4
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

5 RATATOUILLE
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

6 HARRY POTTER 5
11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00

7 BLIND DATING
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

8 indieSine: HANGGANG DITO NA LAMANG.
1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30

9 TRANSFORMERS
1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00

10 VACANCY
1:30 3:35 5:40 7:45 9:50

SHOWING TODAY !

Felino Tañada's
HANGGANG DITO NA LAMANG AT MARAMING SALAMAT PO

This is the film adaptation of **Orlando Nadres'** breakthrough play about homosexuality, starring **Nonie Buencamino** as a repressed pawnshop owner, **Jon Santos**, as the town's beautician, and **Jerwin Mercado** as the man that will change their lives forever.

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11:00 1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00

3 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00

4 RATATOUILLE
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

5 BLIND DATING
12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 10:00

6 TRANSFORMERS
11:00MF 1:35 4:10 6:50 10:00

7 HARRY POTTER 5
11:00MF 1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00

Meet and Greet the cast

Asia Agcaoili • Paolo Paraiso • Michael Rivero

AUGUST 01

Robinsons Movieworld ERMITA
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3:30PM

Robinsons Movieworld GALLERIA
4th level Cinema Lobby
5:30PM

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1 TRANSFORMERS
12:00MF 3:00 6:00 9:00

2 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10

3 RATATOUILLE
10:45 1:20 3:55 6:30 9:05

4 BLIND DATING
12:05 2:15 4:25 6:35 9:00

5 DIE HARD 4
12:45 3:30 6:15 9:00

6 VACANCY
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

7 HARRY POTTER 5
11:00 1:35 4:10 6:45 9:20

8 OUIJA
12:10 2:25 4:40 6:55 9:10

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2 RATATOUILLE
3 OUIJA
4 TRANSFORMERS
5 DIE HARD 4
6 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE

PIONEER
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1 OUIJA
1:10MF 3:35 6:00 8:25

2 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
12:05MF 2:15 4:25 6:35 8:40

3 RATATOUILLE
1:15MF 3:45 6:15 8:40

4 BLIND DATING
12:05 2:15 4:25 6:35 8:40

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4 CAPE KARMA
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3 OUIJA
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4 RATATOUILLE
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3 OUIJA
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2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 VACANCY

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2 DIE HARD 4
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 OUIJA
5 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
6 HARRY POTTER 5

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2 OUIJA
3 RATATOUILLE
4 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
5 ZODIAC
6 TRANSFORMERS

FORMER Time Machine co-singer Didith Reyes guests on Celeste's TV show.

AS "The New Yorker in Tondo," with Tommy Abuel (right).

"KATY!" cast Marco Sison, Mitch Valdez, Celeste and Bernardo Bernardo invite Katy de la Cruz (center) onstage.

A DAY in the life of Celeste, by husband Nonoy.

Eternal sunshine of Celeste's mind

Now retired, the singer-actress, who started as a 'moro-morista,' wants to go back to school

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Ryan Lim
ADDITIONAL PHOTOS COURTESY OF CELESTE LEGASPI

BE FOREWARNED, SHE SAID BEFORE granting the interview, "I'm retired and very *mataray* (feisty)."

Singer-actress Celeste Legaspi, daughter of National Artist for Visual Arts Cesar Legaspi, always had the knack for high drama.

In Grade 2, she sang grownup songs like Paul Anka's "Verboten" for the nuns of St. Paul Quezon City.

"I sang 'our love is … forbidden' and had no clue what it meant," she said, laughing. "I heard it on the radio and liked the melody."

YESTERDAY

Oral history, she jokingly referred to the interview and, true to her word, was brutally honest in dishing out comments, most especially if it pertained to her own work.

Stage actor Tommy Abuel confirmed: "Celeste says what's on her mind."

Abuel starred with Legaspi in college musicals like "Showboat" in St. Paul Manila and other theater productions in the late 1960s.

"Not too many people know that Celeste started as a *moro morista*," Abuel recalled.

"My roots can be traced to community theater, the Kudyapi Cultural Group of Don Galo in Parañaque, which staged *moro-moros* or *komedyas*," Legaspi looked back.

At age 13, St. Paul dentist Felicidad Mendoza, a Kudyapi founder, asked Legaspi's mother, Betty, if the budding performer could train under "the grandmothers and grandfathers of Don Galo."

Precious training

"At first I didn't want to go," Celeste related, laughing. "I was young. I didn't understand what it was all about. That I was undergoing a precious, unique training."

She had to memorize "pages and pages of dialogue in deep Tagalog. It took a lot of discipline. You couldn't ad-lib because it was in rhyme."

Abuel recounted that "the audience would clap every time Celeste did the *marcha*. She was charming."

At 18, Legaspi landed the lead role of "Prinsesa Perlita," which co-starred Abuel and was staged at Fort Santiago.

Two directors who later became National Artists caught "Perlita": Lino Brocka and Rolando Tinio.

The former cast her in movies and TV shows; the latter, in stage plays.

Her first Brocka movie was "Santiago," top-billed by another National Artist, Fernando Poe Jr., in 1970.

"But if you blinked, you wouldn't notice me," she said, chortling. "We spent six hours waiting, but our scene only took 30 minutes to shoot."

A year later, Brocka gave her a bigger role as the partner of Mario O'Hara in "Stardoom."

She often played Hilda Koronel's sister in the TV dramas directed by Brocka. "I also worked as ghost singer for Hilda. Channel 9 paid me P50 for three songs."

ST. PAUL colegiala and *moro-moro* actress.

IN A Salvador Bernal original.

MANILA Hotel reopening, photo by Mike de Leon.

Brocka wanted to give her P75, but the network balked.

"So Lino fetched me from our apartment in a taxi so that I wouldn't have to commute."

One late night, she shared a cab with Brocka and actress Rita Gomez.

"They thought I was asleep, so Lino and Rita kept gossiping."

It was pretty raunchy show biz *chismis*.

"They kept screaming: 'The little girl might hear us,'" she remembered.

In 1976, Legaspi, by then an established singer, reunited with Brocka in a TV special, "Iba't Ibang Celeste," which won a Patas Sinag award.

"We didn't have money for a fog machine," she said. "So Brocka asked the male crew to smoke at my foot while I was singing 'Tuliro.' But I'm asthmatic, so I got sick!"

What she would do for her art.

From Tinio, she said, she learned the lesson of humility.

He directed her in various plays—from Shakespearean translations to *moro-moro* productions at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP).

In "Prinsipe Baldovino," he gave her a difficult monologue. "I had to run from one end of the stage to the other—all the while crying and reciting kilometric lines."

Making matters more arduous, she had to wear a "10-foot golden cape."

"He was worried that I might trip, so he weighed down the cape," she reminisced.

After stints with the Ambivalent Crowd and Time Machine show bands, Legaspi waxed her first solo album, a collection of English pop songs translated to Filipino by Tinio in 1976.

"It was a Teatro Pilipino project," she related. "Tinio had previously translated arias for baritone Aurelio Estanislao and soprano Conching Rosal."

In 1997, she again teamed up with Tinio in "Ang Larawan, The Musical."

"Since I knew how strict he was, I always came on time," she said. "Some chorus members, however, were habitually late."

Needless to say, they got a dose of the Tinio temper.

"He screamed and called them *langaw* (flies)," she said. "Ten days before we opened, he passed away. At his wake, the chorus members were wailing: 'We are the flies of Rolando Tinio!' He really taught us to be humble."

She acknowledged that her training with Brocka and Tinio had primed her well by the time she crossed over to the pop scene in the mid-1970s.

"My breakthrough song was 'Saranggola ni Pepe' (composed by husband Nonoy Gallardo)," she recalled. "[The record label] wanted to promote another song. But the radio listeners themselves picked 'Saranggola' and it became a hit."

AT THE grand relaunch of the Manila Hotel, with Hajji Alejandro.

IN GERMANY, with comedian Bert "Tawa" Marcelo

PHOTO by Mike de Leon

From 1983 to 1987, she staged a series of concept concerts—the high point of which was "Celeste Tunog PPO," her farewell show with the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra at the CCP.

"My father told me that my concerts were good, but they were not original," she recounted.

She took it to heart. "I took it as a challenge."

Musical tribute

In 1988, she produced the musical "Katy!"—a tribute to the grande dame of *bodabil* Katy de la Cruz.

"[Director] Nestor Torre wanted me to play Katy, but I told him Mitch Valdes would be perfect," Legaspi said.

"She's very generous," Valdes said of Legaspi. "Very astute, when it comes to creative decisions."

An uphill climb, Legaspi called "Katy!" "We had to raise P2 million from scratch."

Somehow she pulled it off.

Later, she teamed up with manager Girlie Rodis, formed Musical Theatre Philippines with other friends, and mounted a string of original works: "Kenkoy Loves Rosing," "Alikabok," "Sino Ka Ba Jose Rizal," "Larawan," "Fire Water Woman" and "Saranggola ni Pepe."

Ryan Cayabyab, frequent musical director, said of Legaspi, the producer: "She works as a good team leader in motivating people to give their best with whatever budget is available. She's a professional through and through."

She can also be a tad quixotic, Legaspi admitted.

"We were crazy," she said, gasping. "We ended up in hock because of our plays. We only finished paying our debts for 'Alikabok' late last year. To think, it was first shown in 1995. Good thing, our creditors didn't throw us in jail. Don Quixote to the max!"

Not idle

She admitted that she had often encountered resistance in marketing her plays. "People would tell us: 'Tagalog plays are corny; we prefer Western stuff.'"

Can you blame her then if she chooses to spend her days now in quiet retirement?

Retired, but not idle, she clarified.

Now that her three children are grownups, she has plenty of time to devote to her other passions, she said.

With the group Museum Volunteers of the Philippines, she has traveled to China, India, Bhutan and Nepal.

She has studied Mandarin and Spanish and has also picked up painting.

"I did that," she said, pointing to a colorful mural in the garden. "It's an Indian folk style called Madhubani."

Her interest in Asian traditions led her to Masantol, a town in Pampanga where she witnessed a unique fiesta called Batalla last year.

"It had a pagan feel to it. The people were shaking the *imahen*, while macho men with flowers were caressing the *imahen*," she noted.

Such experiences inspire her to go back to school and take a master's degree in cultural anthropology or history.

"I love studying *pala*. I didn't know that when I was younger," said the eternal student of Brocka, Tinio, and the *lolos* and *lolas* of Don Galo.

SINGING "Nasaan ang Palakpakan" at the Third Metro Pop.

ONSTAGE at the CCP with the PPO.

ON "Two for the Road," with (from R) Sampaguita, Elvira Manahan, Rita Gomez and Norma Japitana.

Bonding, visions and donuts in 'Simpsons' epic

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

REVIEW

HOMER BECOMES A MONUmental loser. Marge offers odd advice. Bart gets drunk. Lisa falls for a fellow nerd. And Maggie ... well, she's quiet, as usual. It's still "The Simpsons" the way you remember them, but they get a bigger sandbox.

Their long-running animated series finally gets the big screen treatment in "The Simpsons Movie," which means the beloved extra-dysfunctional family gets in bigger trouble and funnier hi-jinks that can't be contained in the weekly episodes. Like the successful crossovers of other irreverent TV cartoons like "Beavis and Butthead" and "South Park," the transition is smooth.

Unending idiocies

"The Simpsons Movie" will thrill devout or casual viewers as they'll be treated to more than the regular dose of Homer's unending idiocies, Lisa's world-saving crusades, Bart's misadventures, and so on. Even the furious Springfield residents going after them are now legion.

Pointed jabs

The film keeps the Matt Groening-created characters' traits intact, and utilizes the same voice talents (Dan Castellaneta, Yeardley Smith, Julie Kavner, Nancy Cartwright, Hank Azaria, and Harry Shearer). The look, sound and storytelling structures are mostly unchanged; it actually feels like an expanded version of one of the better episodes.

But the laughs are more consistent and cleverly paced. And there are pointed jabs at pop culture, politics and religion.

It's still about the husband-wife, parent-child and brother-sister bonds and conflicts. It's not the first time that Homer neglects his children because he's a dimwit and too self-absorbed. Also, Marge's sobering words repeatedly inspire her hubby and the kids.

We've seen Lisa find kinship with like-minded eggheads before, and Bart has rebelled and experienced humiliation. But this time, all these occur in a larger setting.

Disaster

When Homer recklessly causes a major environmental disaster, Springfield is quarantined, causing his family's neighbors and friends to turn into a torch-carrying mob. The Simpsons do their best to escape, and their fragile relationships with each other are tested for the nth time.

Fans will appreciate the brief appearances of quirky characters from the series, as well as the opportunity to see them together in some of the big scenes.

Chaotic

The assortment of wild, boisterous denizens colors the Simpsons' world with absurd imagination. It just wouldn't be the same without these minor but crucial supporting players.

The quintessential chaotic family almost always have a hand in events that affect everyone in their small hub, and you can't help but get involved and anticipate the wacky repercussions. But over the years, despite their clashing personalities and dispositions, the members of the Simpsons clan have learned to appreciate their coexistence. "The Simpsons Movie" recaptures those valuable truths as well, in a very entertaining manner.

The thin and thick of stardom

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

MOST STARS WORK hard to maintain a standard weight and image through the years, the better to meet their fans' "signature" preconceptions.

Also, when stars look trim and fit, they sustain the illusion of stopping the hands of time, and freezing the downward pull of gravity, making it possible for them to look like they're still in their 30s—way into their 50s and 60s!

On the other hand, less disciplined stars enjoy the perks of stardom too much, and gain loads of pounds that make them look obese on our TV and movie screens.

Our local action stars are particularly guilty of this. For some reason, they think it's OK for them to do action scenes and romance their youthful leading ladies while huffing and puffing from having to carry all that extra avoirdupois.

At the other extreme, we have the gaunt, anorexic and bulimic stars who eat as little as possible so they can look svelte in the tight and revealing gowns they wear on the red carpet. They don't realize that the sight of their rib cages in full display isn't exactly pleasing or sexy in the eyes of many viewers.

At other instances, gaining or losing a lot of weight becomes part of an actor's preparation for a role. If you're cast as a prisoner in a concentration camp, you can't look pleasingly plump, right?

On the other hand, if you're playing a housewife who allows herself to go to pot, you can't be reed-thin on the movie screen, either.

Dramatic examples of this abound. Early in his career, **Robert De Niro** was tapped to play the has-been boxing champion, Jake LaMotta. To look appropriately fat and psychologically defeated, De Niro went on an eating binge that added 60 pounds to his wiry frame.

Looking extremely believable in his role, he came up with a memorable portrayal and won raves for his utter dedication to completely credible characterization.

De Niro reveled in the praises he got—until he had to work even harder to take those additional 60 pounds off!

The poster child for celluloid weight manipulation is **Christian Bale**. For "American Psycho," he added 55 pounds. Then, he had to take off 63 pounds for "The Machinist." And then he had to build up his body to the tune of 100 pounds of muscle for his "Batman" role!

That's not all. These days, Bale is playing a starving castaway in the new film, "Rescue Dawn," for which role he's taken off 60 pounds! Portrait of Christian Bale: human yo-yo.

Anak TV supporter

A landmark institution in maritime and passenger services for the past 75 years, Negros Navigation will mark its diamond anniversary starting this month with a series of activities that aim to demonstrate its gratitude to the nation. Anak TV, which the shipping company has been hosting for three years now, has been tapped to help.

Meet and Greet the cast
Asia Agcaoili • Paolo Paraiso • Michael Rivero
AUGUST 01
Robinsons Movieworld
ERMITA
4th level Cinema Lobby
3:30PM

GALLERIA
4th level Cinema Lobby
5:30PM

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	OUIJA BOARD 1:10 / 3:20 / 5:30 / 7:40 / 9:50		
HARRY POTTER 5 12:50 / 3:50 / 6:50 / 9:50	TRANSFORMERS 12:50 / 3:50 / 6:50 / 9:50	DIE HARD 4 1:20 / 4:10 / 7:00 / 9:50	THE SIMPSONS 1:50 / 4:00 RATATOUILLE 6:20 / 9:00

ALIMALL 5

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Drew Carey to host 'The Price Is Right'

DREW Carey on "Late Show with David Letterman." REUTERS

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"All I'm doing is giving away prizes, and it's not even my money," he said. *Reuters*

CLICK!

'Entourage' Season 3 starts tonight

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Reprising their roles are Adrien Grenier as Vince the star, Kevin Connolly as Eric the manager, Kevin Dillon as the half-brother, Jerry Ferrara as the friend, and Jeremy Piven as Ari Gold, the super-agent.

Some fast facts about the series and its cast:

- Grenier was elected one of the hottest bachelors in 2007 by the US entertainment magazine People.
- "Entourage" won in the 2007 British Academy Television Awards, International category.
- Piven won Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Comedy Series at the 2006 Emmy Awards.
- Grenier has directed a documentary, "Shot in the Dark," detailing his search for his real father, John Dunbar. HBO premiered the docu earlier this month in the US.
- Rex Lee, who plays Aris assistant Lloyd, is a trained pianist in real life.
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"ENTOURAGE"

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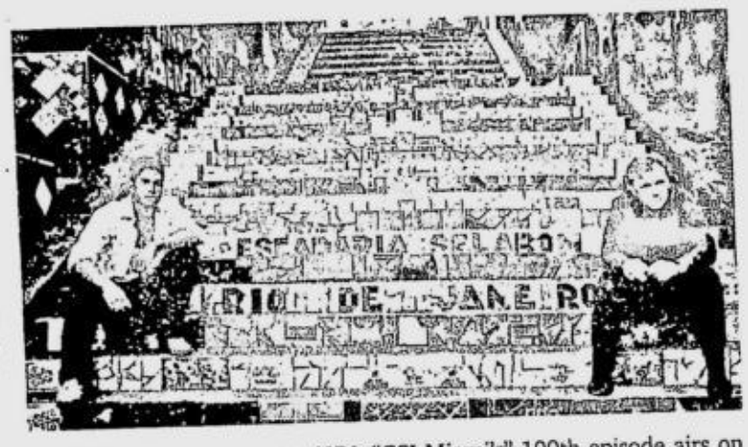

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Horatio Caine (David Caruso) and Eric Delko (Adam Rodriguez) are in hot pursuit of the man behind the death of Marisol Delko Caine, Eric's sister and Horatio's wife who was murdered by drug lord Antonio Riaz.

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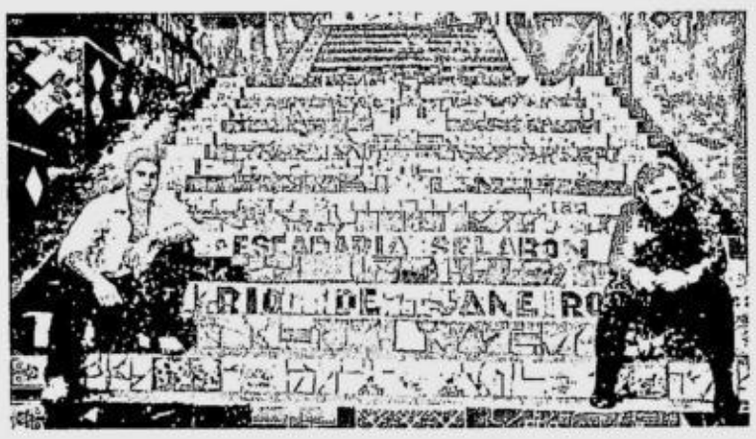

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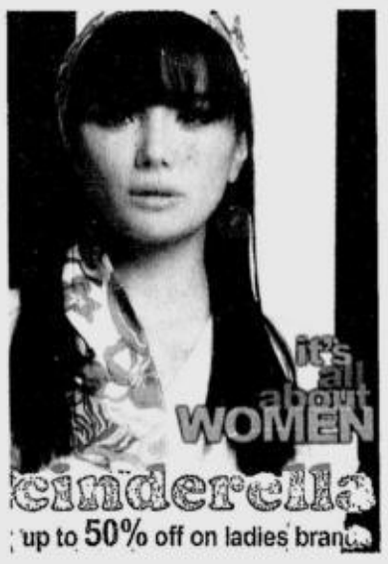

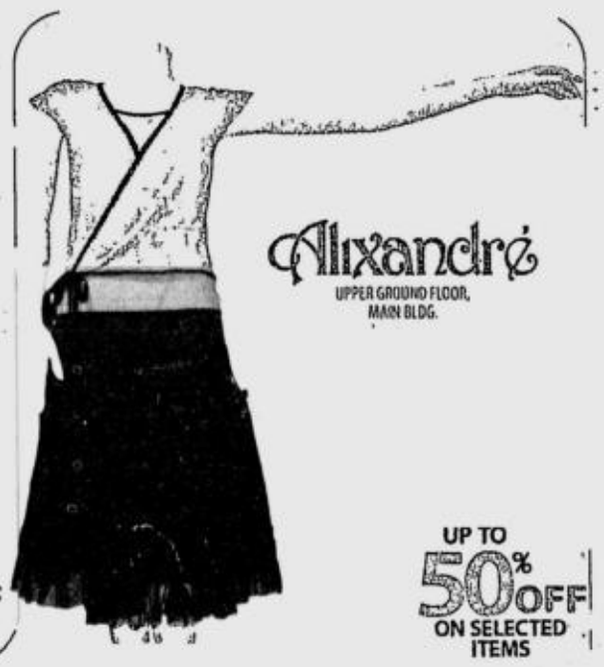

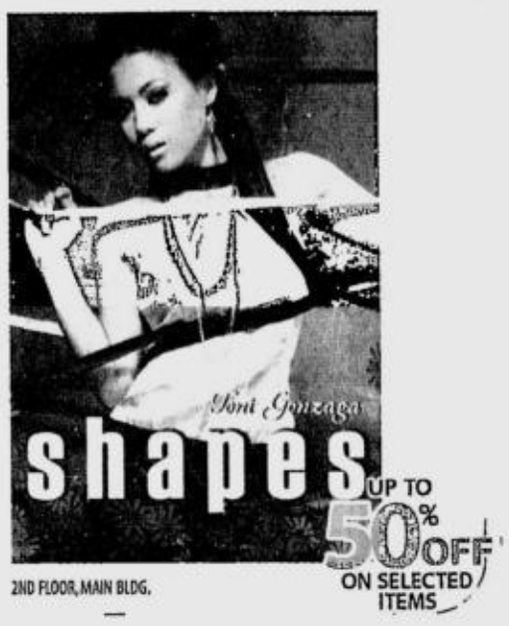

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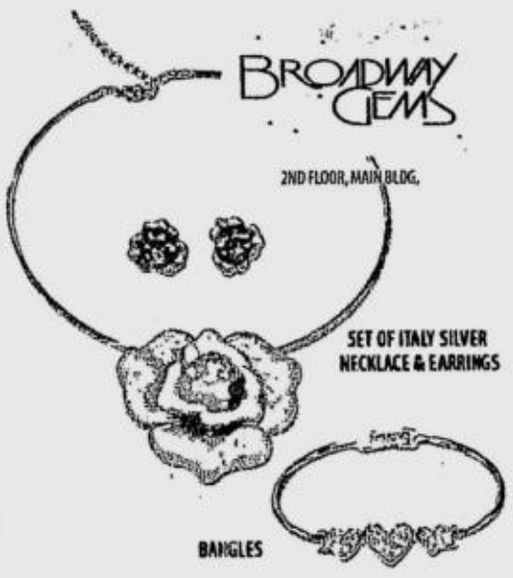

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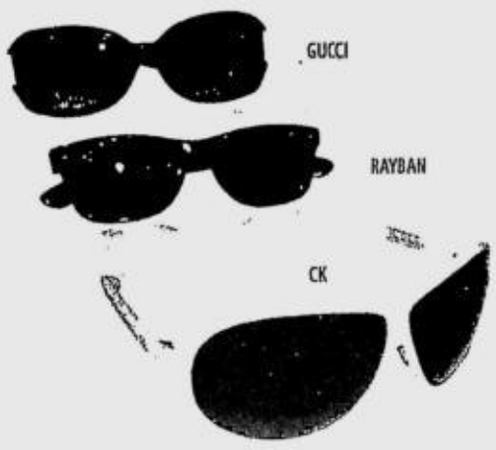

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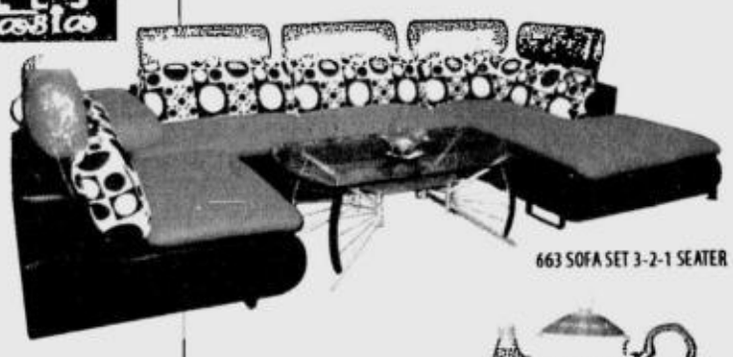

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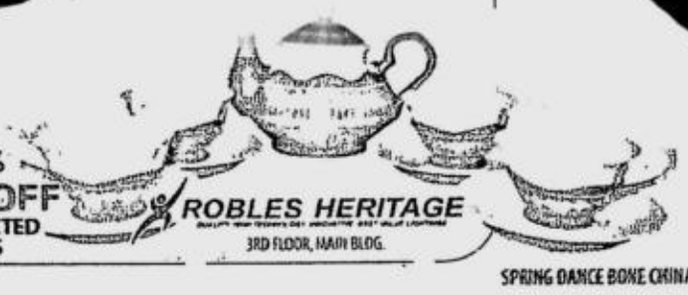

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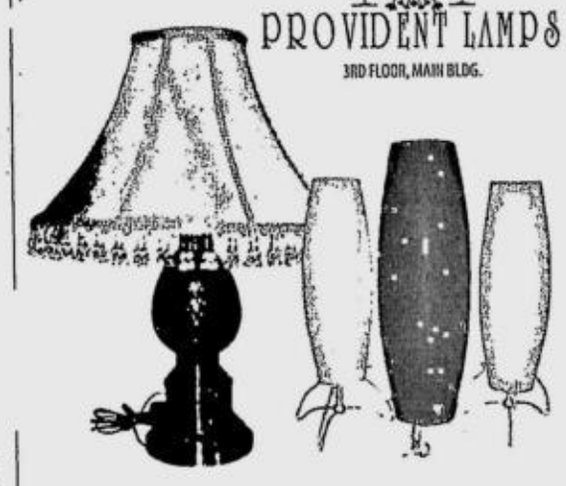
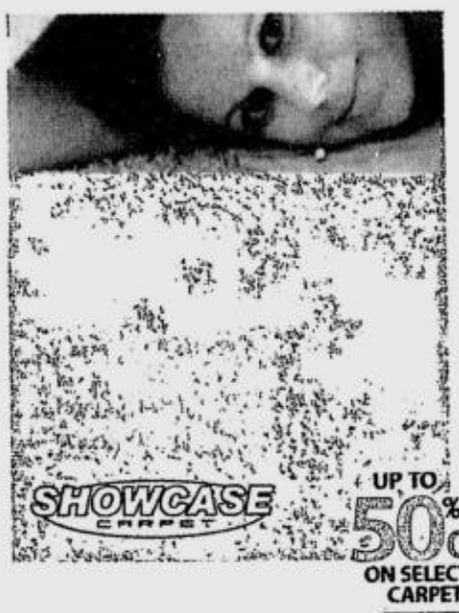


TABLE LAMPS



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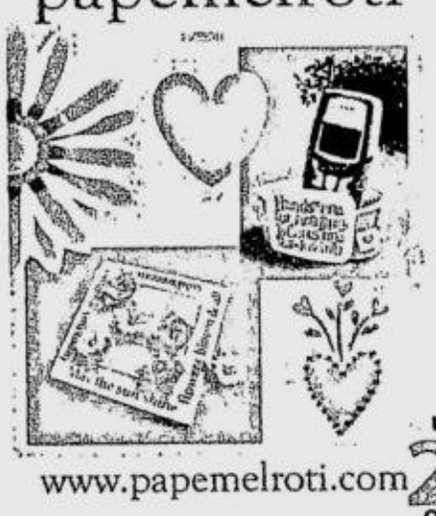

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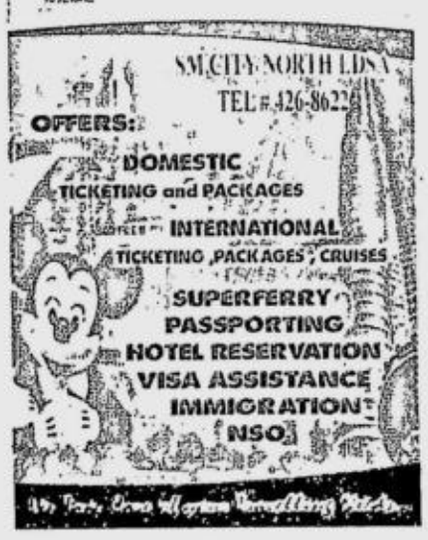

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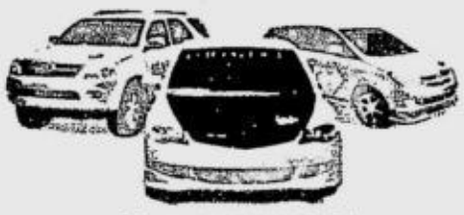

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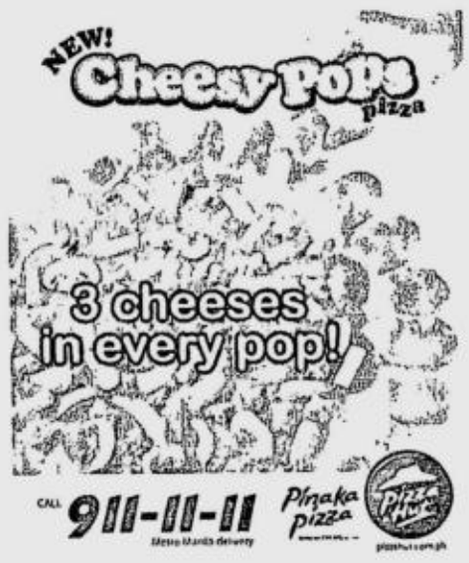

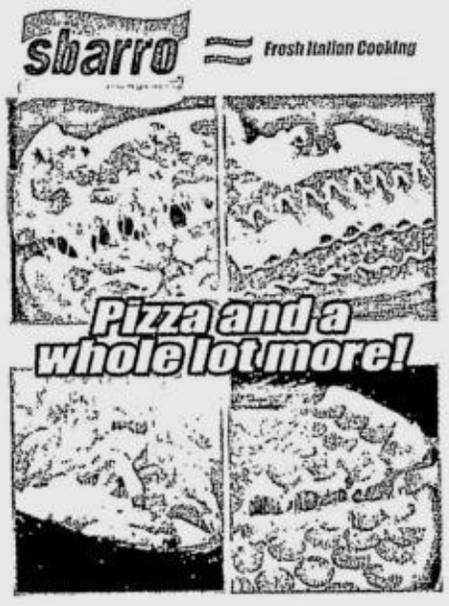

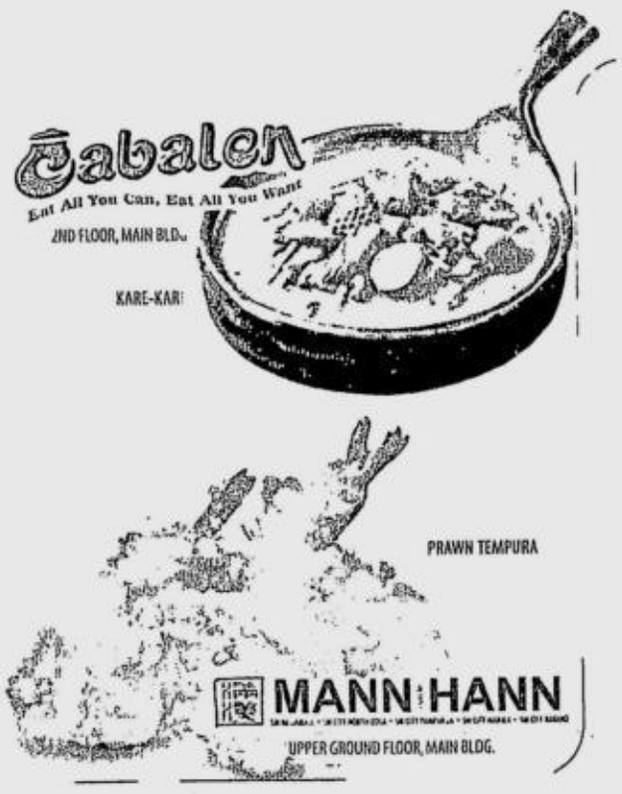

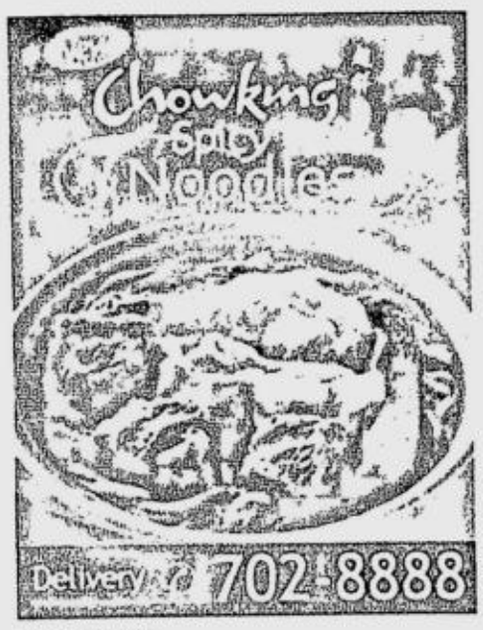

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ACROSS/ A15
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WORLD / A22
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SPORTS / A17
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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
A[illegible]ED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
[illegible], July 31, [illegible] ★★ 7 sections / Vol. 22 / N[illegible]3 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

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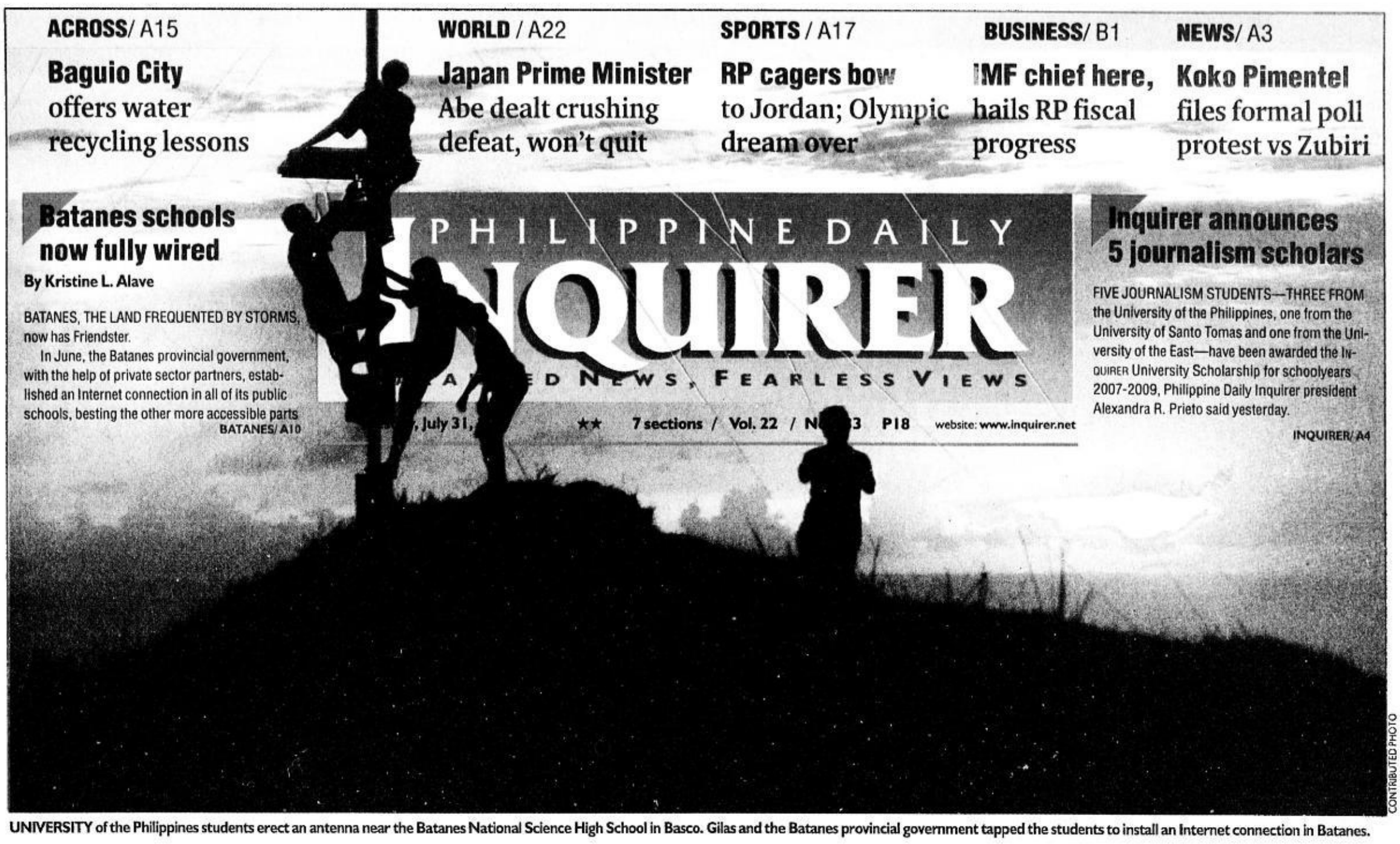
INQUIRER/ A4



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Judge shuts out Trillanes

Cutback harder on CL farmers

By TJ Burgonio, Kristine L. Alave *in Manila* and Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes *Inquirer Northern Luzon*

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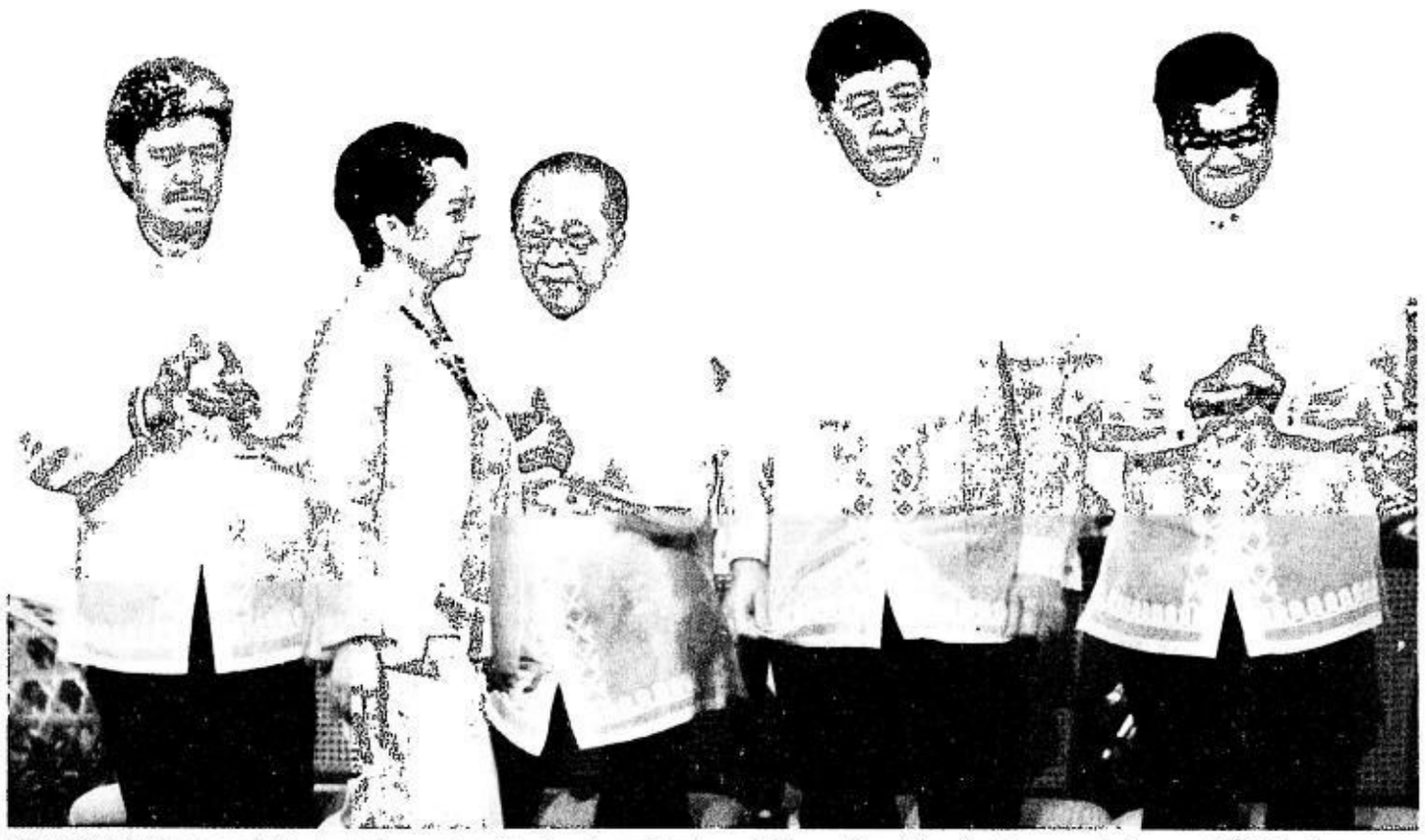
CUTBACK/ A6



PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo walks past applauding Asean foreign ministers after delivering her speech to open the 40th Asean Ministerial Meeting at the PICC in Pasay City. The four are Prince Mohammed Bolkiah of Brunei Darussalam, Hor Namhong of Cambodia, Nur Hassan Wirajuda of Indonesia and Thongloun Sisoulith of Laos. EDWIN BACASMAS

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BURMA/ A8

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Romulo hailed the breakthrough as "an apparent victory for the Philippines," which is on its final days holding the rotating chairmanship of the 10-nation bloc and which also heads the high-level task force that had drafted the landmark charter.

"I am pleased to announce that among the issues on which there has been a consensus among the Asean foreign ministers is the inclusion of a provision in the Asean charter that mandates the creation of a human rights body," Romulo said in a statement.

He said the ministers, meeting behind

ASEAN/ A8

Cinemalaya: 'Bad boys' finish first

RUDY ESPERAS

THEY didn't expect this. "We just came for the food," said this year's Best Actors at the Cinemalaya Film Festival. "Tribu," directed by Jim Libiran (center), starred these Tondo gang members.

By Marinel R. Cruz *Entertainment*

"MAYOR LIM, THERE ARE OTHER ways to stop violence in Tondo. Please stop killing my boys; they are Best Actor winners now. They could be our next national artists."

Thus spoke Jim Libiran in accepting the award for his full-length feature "Tribu," which chronicles the activities of real-life gangsters in Tondo, Manila.

The movie was declared Best Picture in the 3rd Philippine Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival which ended Sunday night.

Manila Mayor Lim recently launched a crackdown on crime and violence in the city.

Libiran told the INQUIRER after the ceremonies: "Five gang members have died since Mayor Lim assumed office. Three nights ago, I received a call from two of the boys [in the movie], asking for help because the police had ar-

CINEMALAYA/ A4

Lapus told: Neri no education czar

By Michael Lim Ubac Beverly T. Natividad

NEITHER ONE WOULD ENCROACH on the other's turf.

Malacañang gave this assurance

LAPUS/ A6

Witness tells how 4 men took away Joe Burgos son

By Jerome Aning

THE FIRST WITNESS PRESENTED BY the Burgos camp in the Court of Appeals recounted the moments before activist Jonas Burgos was forcibly dragged away by four men from the Hapag Kainan restaurant at the Ever Gotesco mall in Quezon City at around 1:30 p.m. on April 28.

"He was struggling to get free and he shouted "*Aktibista lang po ako* (I'm just an activist) thrice," Elsa Agasang, 24, Hapag Kainan's acting supervisor, recounted to the court on the second day of the hearing on the petition for a writ of habeas corpus filed by Edita Burgos, Jonas' mother.

Agasang said she and her staff were

WITNESS/ A11

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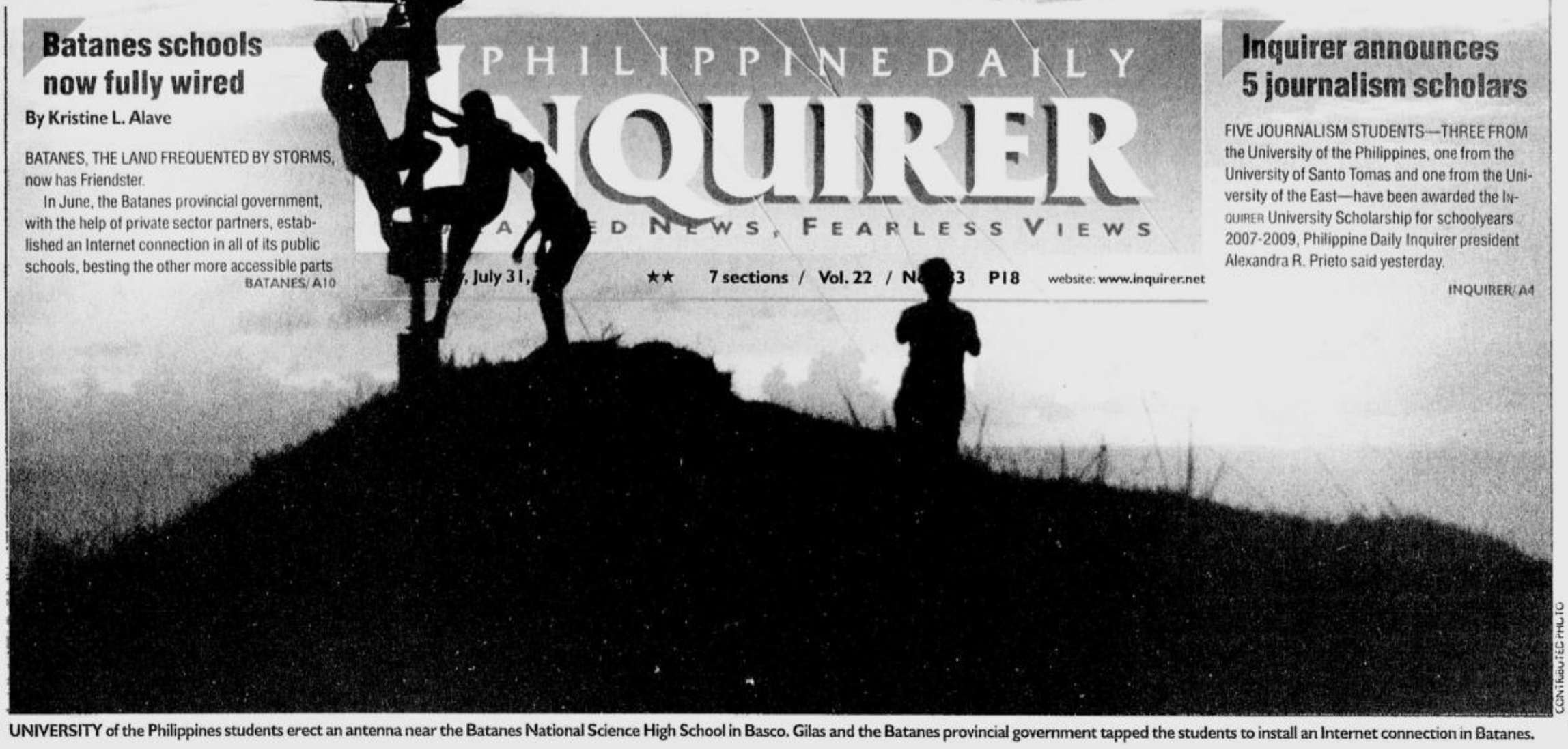

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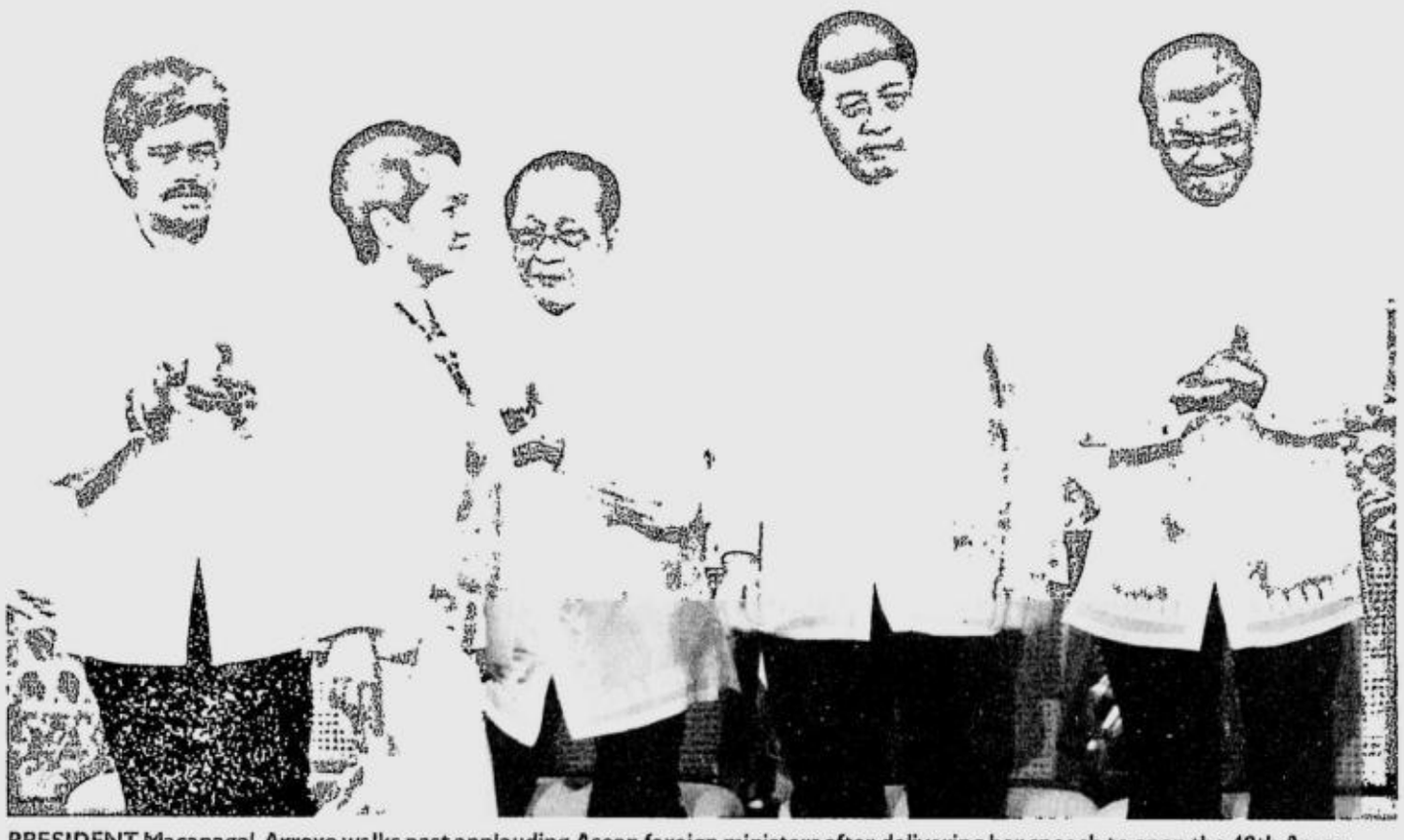

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Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo yesterday said a "consensus" was reached in the 40th Asean Ministers Meeting (AMM) for the draft Asean charter to include a provision calling for the creation of a human rights commission.

Romulo hailed the breakthrough as "an apparent victory for the Philippines," which is on its final days holding the rotating chairmanship of the 10-nation bloc and which also heads the high-level task force that had drafted the landmark charter.

"I am pleased to announce that among the issues on which there has been a consensus among the Asean foreign ministers is the inclusion of a provision in the Asean charter that mandates the creation of a human rights body," Romulo said in a statement.

He said the ministers, meeting behind

ASEAN/ A8

Cinemalaya: 'Bad boys' finish first

RUDY ESPELETA

THEY didn't expect this. "We just came for the food," said this year's Best Actors at the Cinemalaya Film Festival. "Tribu," directed by Jim Libiran (center), starred these Tondo gang members.

By Marinel R. Cruz
Entertainment

"MAYOR LIM, THERE ARE OTHER ways to stop violence in Tondo. Please stop killing my boys; they are Best Actor winners now. They could be our next national artists."

Thus spoke Jim Libiran in accepting the award for his full-length feature "Tribu," which chronicles the activities of real-life gangsters in Tondo, Manila.

The movie was declared Best Picture in the 3rd Philippine Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival which ended Sunday night.

Manila Mayor Lim recently launched a crackdown on crime and violence in the city.

Libiran told the INQUIRER after the ceremonies: "Five gang members have died since Mayor Lim assumed office. Three nights ago, I received a call from two of the boys [in the movie], asking for help because the police had ar-

CINEMALAYA/ A4

Lapus told: Neri no education czar

By Michael Lim Ubac
Beverly T. Natividad

NEITHER ONE WOULD ENCROACH on the other's turf.

Malacañang gave this assurance

LAPUS/ A6

Witness tells how 4 men took away Joe Burgos son

By Jerome Aning

THE FIRST WITNESS PRESENTED BY the Burgos camp in the Court of Appeals recounted the moments before activist Jonas Burgos was forcibly dragged away by four men from the Hapag Kainan restaurant at the Ever Gotesco mall in Quezon City at around 1:30 p.m. on April 28.

"He was struggling to get free and he shouted "*Aktibista lang po ako* (I'm just an activist) thrice," Elsa Agasang, 24, Hapag Kainan's acting supervisor, recounted to the court on the second day of the hearing on the petition for a writ of habeas corpus filed by Edita Burgos, Jonas' mother.

Agasang said she and her staff were

WITNESS/ A11

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TUESDAY, JULY 31, 2007

EZ2 FOUR DIGIT
5 31 | 5 5 8 8
Mid-Day SUERTRES Evening
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Second FrontPage

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

Metro Manila	Mostly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Mostly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Mostly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Mostly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Mostly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Mostly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Mostly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Mostly Cloudy
Legazpi	Mostly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Mostly Cloudy
Calapan	Mostly Cloudy	Davao	Mostly Cloudy

COMPILED BY SCHATZI QUODALA, PDI RESEARCH/07/30/07 SOURCE PAGASA

Negotiators want one more day

Unless Palace complies, all-out war seen as inevitable

By Christine O. Avendaño and Julie S. Alipala
Inquirer Mindanao

PEACE NEGOTIATORS ASKED for one more day to complete their fact-finding mission. But unless Malacañang intervenes at the last minute today, thousands of police and military contingents will move into rebel-held areas in Alkabar, Basilan, to try and bring in over a hundred people believed to be involved in the brutal beheading of 10 Marines on July 10.

Many local officials and nongovernment leaders believe this will be the beginning of another round of an all-out war in Mindanao. Residents of several barangays have fled for cover.

In Fort Bonifacio, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. yesterday bade good luck to a newly retrained Marine Battalion Landing Team that would be joining thousands of other soldiers already in Basilan.

"*Nakahanda na ba kayo*? (Are you ready)?" Esperon bellowed from the grandstand to the 400-member elite battalion armed with new firearms, ammunition and communication equipment. The troops, who will be replacing another Marine battalion there, shouted out their affirmative reply.

Esperon had given the Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities (CCCH) composed of representatives of the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) three days to complete its investigation on who really beheaded and mutilated the Marines.

The three-day deadline lapsed yesterday.

Marine commandant Maj. Gen. Nelson Allaga said the soldiers will be going after a group with a mix of members from the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Abu Sayyaf Group and lawless armed elements. If they resist arrest, *labanan na* (it's war)!" he said

In Zamboanga City, the government and the MILF's joint coordinating committee on the cessation of hostilities (JCCCH) were still trying to stall the clash.

"As a collective body, we recommended to our respective principals an extension of another 24 hours," Brig. Gen. Edgardo Gurrea, the government JCCCH chair, told reporters here on Monday.

Gurrea said he had relayed the request to government chief negotiator Gen. Rodolfo Garcia. He said his counterpart in the MILF, Von Al Haq, did the same with the rebel group's chief negotiator Mohager Iqbal.

Gurrea's group had visited Albarka and interviewed about 17 walk-in witnesses. But he admitted they were having difficulty inviting more witnesses "because of fear, and that is why we want to work closely with the Department of Justice so we can assure them of protection."

In a phone interview Monday morning, Guerra said Al Haq had expressed the MILF's willingness to surrender their forces if this would be the joint fact-finding mission's recommendation.

But Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao, police chief for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), said his "orders were to serve the warrant today."

Senior Supt. Salik Macapantar, police chief for Basilan, backed by 300 policemen and the military, will serve the warrant on 113 respondents.

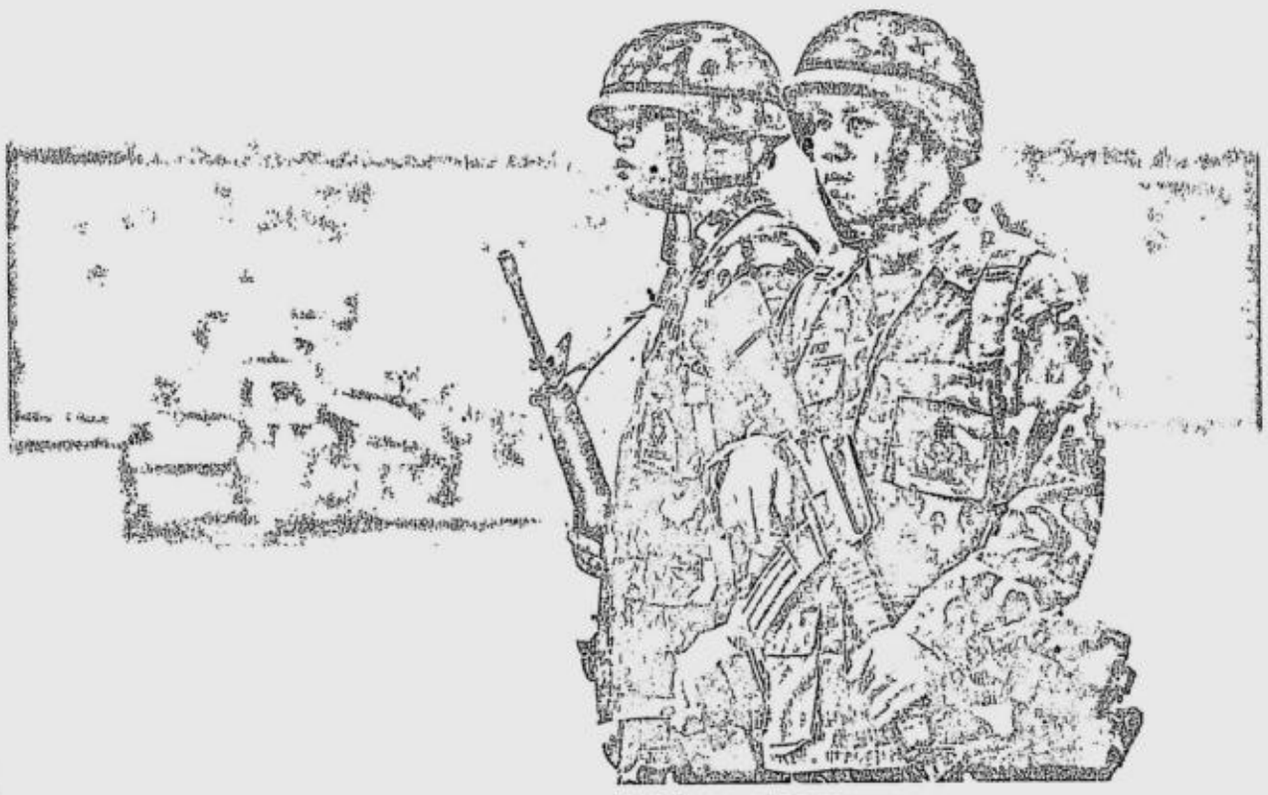
Several town officials are expected to guide them and point to the people to whom the warrant is addressed, he said. They expect resistance, he added.

Task Force Thunder chief Brig. Gen. Juancho Sabban said the Armed Forces of the Philippines would lead the military support for what they called "limited police action."

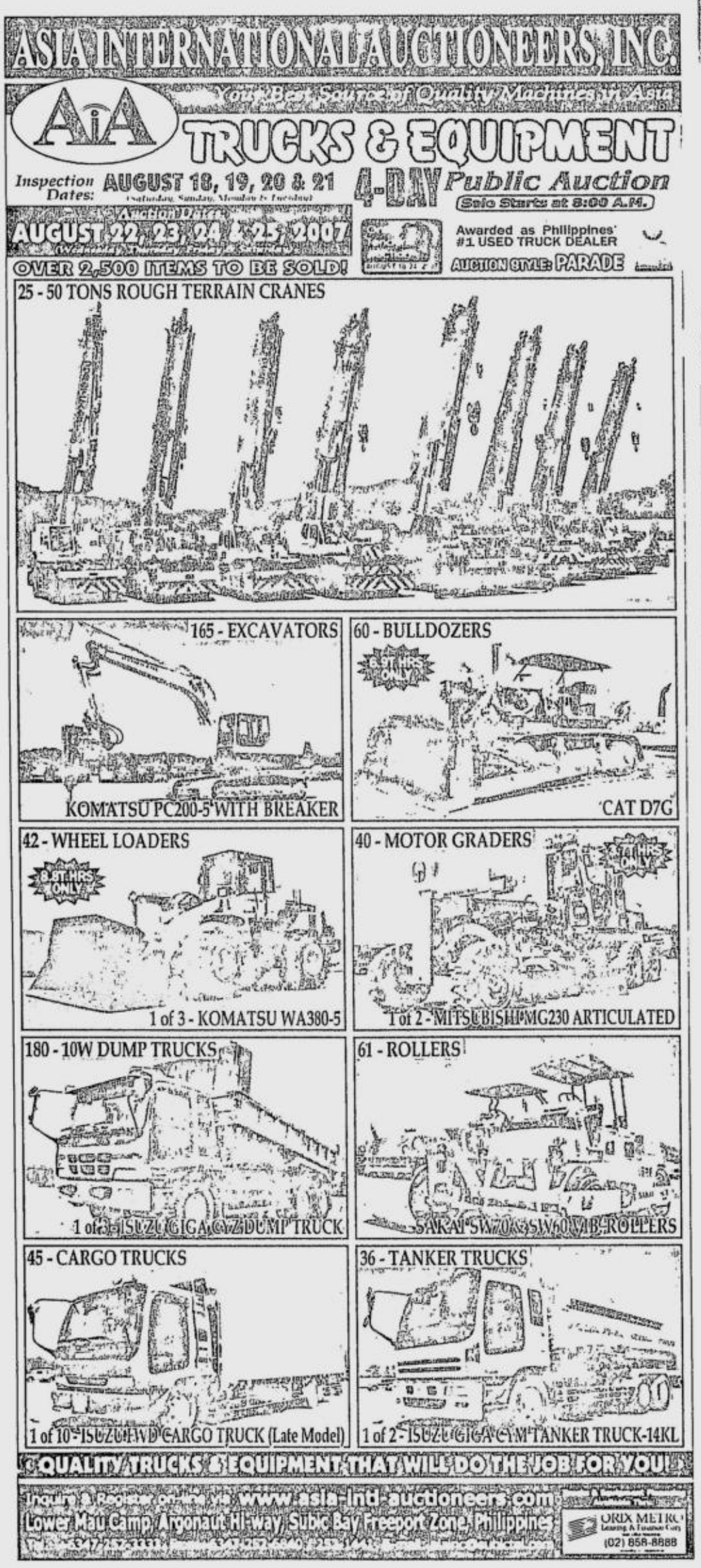
As the police and military prepared for D-Day, some officials in Basilan expressed concern over the refusal of residents to leave their homes.

Jumora Alsree, provincial social welfare and development Officer, told the INQUIRER that many families, estimated at almost 1,000, still hoped to harvest their crops before the war began.

Mindanao-based organizations, meanwhile, condemned yesterday military attempts to declare another all-out war in the region, which could result in thousands of deaths on both combatant and civilian sides. ***With reports from Jeannette I. Andrade, and Charlie S. Señase, Jeoffrey Maitem and Nash B. Maulana, Inquirer Mindanao***



'CALM BEFORE THE ....' Marines guard the Basilan Wharf as a Navy ship (in background) prepares to unload supplies prior to a possible confrontation between government troops and MILF guerrillas over the beheading of 10 Marines three weeks ago. RAFFY LERMA



Erap to give dead Marines' families P.5M each

By Volt Contreras

DEPOSED PRESIDENT JOSEPH Estrada yesterday announced he planned to donate half-a-million pesos each to the families of the 14 Marines killed in an ambush in Basilan on July 10.

He said the money would come from the Saludo sa Kawal Filipino (Salute to the Filipino Soldier) Foundation, a welfare fund he created for the families of slain or wounded government troops shortly after he launched an "all-out war" against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in 2000.

Estrada said he was also considering granting scholarships to the Marines' children, the scholarships to be funded by the Erap Para sa Mahirap Foundation.

Estrada is chair emeritus of Saludo. His son-in-law, Beaver Lopez, who is married to his daughter Jackie Ejercito, serves as its president. Estrada is also the founding chair of Erap Para sa Mahirap.

Estrada maintained that the foundations were private entities not covered by the freeze order on his assets in connection with his plunder case in the Sandiganbayan.

In a phone interview from his Tanay, Rizal, rest house where is under house arrest, Estrada said the Saludo foundation would shortly contact the Philippine Marines to verify the names of the beneficiaries.

He said he did not need to see the families personally, when asked if he wished to be present when the money was turned over.

The 14 Marines were killed in an ambush by MILF combatants in Albarka town after a fruitless search in the jungle for kidnapped Italian priest Giancarlo Bossi. The MILF claimed the Marines entered its territory without prior coordination.

House picks panel chairs; Mikey to energy, Iggy natural resources

By Norman Bordadora

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES continued its organization yesterday with the election of the chairpersons of more committees and the members of the chamber's influential committee on rules.

Two close relatives of President Macapagal-Arroyo were elected to two influential committees—her son, Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, as chair of the committee on energy and her brother-in-law, Negros Occidental Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo, as chair of the committee on natural resources.

Their election came in the wake of related crises in power and water as the lack of rainfall is threatening the operation of hydro-electric power plants.

Others elected included Misamis Occidental Rep. Herminia Ramiro as chair of the committee on accounts, Antique Rep. Exequiel Javier as chair of the committee on ways and means, and Palawan Rep. Abraham Mitra as chair of the committee on agriculture and food.

Senior House member Ilocos Norte Rep. Roquito Ablan was elected chair of the House committee on dangerous drugs, while Nueva Ecija Rep. Rodolfo Antonino was voted chair of the committee on public order.

The plenary elected South Cotabato Rep. Arthur Pinggoy chair of the committee on health and Catanduanes Rep. Joseph Santiago chair of the committee on information and communication technology.

Also elected chairpersons were Bohol Rep. Edgar Chatto of the committee on tourism and Palawan Rep. Antonio Alvarez of the committee on trade and industry.

Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr. was chosen to continue his chairmanship of the committee on suffrage.

Cebu Rep. Antonio Cuenco, who nominated Speaker Jose de Venecia in the speakership election, was also voted to continue his chairmanship of the committee on foreign affairs.

Bulacan Rep. Lorna Silverio was elected chair of the committee on inter-parliamentary relations while Manila Rep. Bienvenido Abante was named chair of the committee on public information.

The chamber also elected members of the committee on rules.

For the House majority, those elected included Cavite Rep. Crispin Remulla, Aurora Rep. Juan Edgardo Angara and Bataan Rep. Albert Garcia.

For the House minority, the members included Minority Floor Leader Ronaldo Zamora of San Juan, Deputy Minority Leader Roilo Golez of Parañaque, South Cotabato Rep. Darlene Antonino-Custodio, Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo and Sharif Kabunsuan and Cotabato City Rep. Didagen Dilangalen.

Already members of the committee on rules are its chair Majority Floor Leader Arthur Defensor of Iloilo and Senior Deputy Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II of Mandaluyong City.

Defensor said those elected on the floor were chosen by the majority coalition in consultation with the member-parties and individual members.

For Pimentel, Senate race vs Zubiri far from over

By Norman Bordadora
and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

GENUINE OPPOSITION SENATORIAL candidate Aquilino Pimentel III yesterday filed an electoral protest against Sen. Juan Miguel Zubiri in the Senate Electoral Tribunal (SET).

The losing candidate called on the SET to annul Zubiri's proclamation as the 12th and last winning senator, and asked that he be refrained from exercising the functions of the office.

For his part, Zubiri just shrugged, saying, "I would like to focus on my work first and let my legal team handle the SET." He said he was confident he would be vindicated.

But Pimentel's lawyer, Leila de Lima, expressed confidence in her client's position considering the relatively small lead of Zubiri he needs to surmount.

De Lima said Zubiri's presumptive lead of more than 19,000 votes had gone down to just over 17 000 after Pimentel received more votes than the former in the special elections held in Pantar, Lanao del Norte, on July 23.

Pimentel's protest covers 44 municipalities in seven provinces. Half of the contested votes are in 22 municipalities of Maguindanao.

The Comelec had proclaimed Zubiri the winner on July 14 with 11,004,099 votes, against Pimentel's 10,984,807 votes.

The controversial certificate of canvass from Maguindanao was produced a month after the elections. "There should have been other (documents) that could have been the basis for its verification," Pimentel told reporters as he filed his protest.

De Lima said Pimentel's election protest was "without prejudice" to the candidate's petition in the Supreme Court that seeks to nullify the municipal certificates of canvass "whose origins, authenticity or due execution were never duly established."

Should the high court grant of Pimentel's petition, this would mean the complaint would be remanded to the National Board of Canvassers in order to give Pimentel a chance to prove his claim that the Maguindanao results had been manufactured, the protest said.

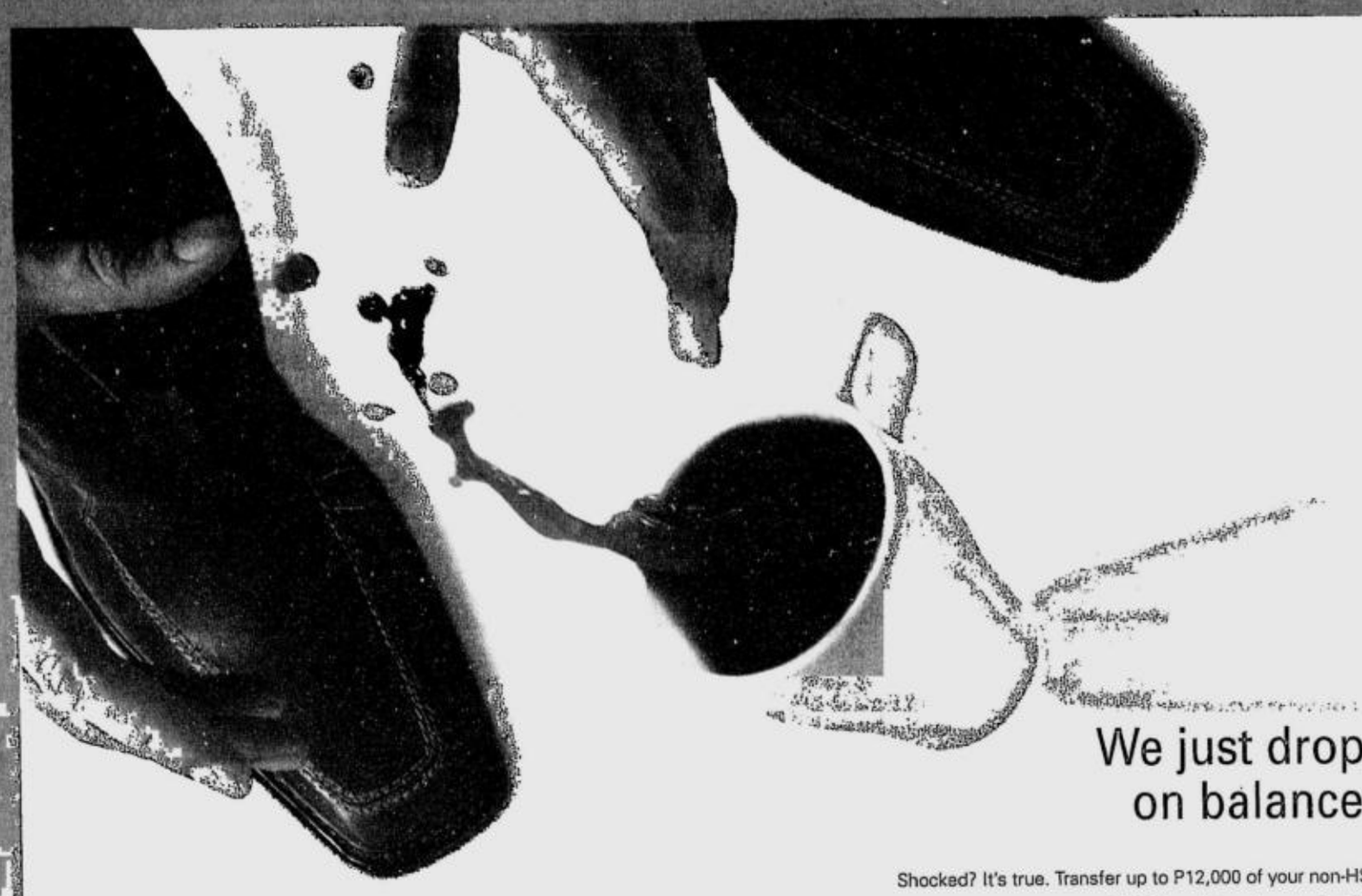
On the other hand, should Pimentel's SC petition be dismissed, the issue of whether or not the Maguindanao votes were truly reflective of the true would of the electorate will necessarily come to the fore, it added.

Meanwhile, a controversy is brewing over the composition of the nine-member SET.

The opposition wants to have the same number of seats as the administration in the SET that will hear Pimentel's protest.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson told reporters yesterday the minority had been allocated only two seats in the SET compared to four seats given to administration senators. The remaining seats are for three Supreme Court justices.

Lacson said that Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. had asked Senate President Manuel Villar to give the opposition and the administration three seats each in order to ensure equal representation on the issue. "I think having 3-3-3 is good enough," said Lacson.



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marie france

Cinemalaya: 'Bad boys' finish first

From page A1

rested them for vagrancy."

The first-time thespians featured in "Tribu" collectively won the Best Actor trophy. According to Libiran, the boys—whose hip hop and freestyle "gangsta rap" music is an essential part of the film—are currently taking poetry classes under National Artist for Literature Virgilio Almario.

Accidental actors

The movie also won for Best Sound for Mark Laccay. Its theme song and soundtrack were composed and recorded by the accidental, but far from reluctant, actors.

In Tondo, as Libiran showed in "Tribu," boys join gangs in search of "quick fixes and cheap thrills." The main characters are bound by a love of hip hop music and freestyle gangsta rap.

The festival's five-member jury commended the film "for its grand and graphic depiction of contemporary Tondo, its raw passion and searing violence, its terrible social conditions and conflicting social mores, and its people's coruscating embrace of both the sacred and the profane, the filial and the tribal, the tender and the vicious."

The jurors were Jérémy Segay, expert on Asian cinema and member of the Cannes Film Festival selection committee; Lito Zulueta, college professor and INQUIRER arts and culture editor; Max Tessier, French film critic; Ma-an Hontiveros, media practitioner and critic; and Salvador Bernal, National Artist for Theater Design.

Best actress

Ina Feleo, daughter of director-actress Laurice Guillen and actor Johnny Delgado, was declared Best Actress for her "sensitive portrayal of a woman from the working class, with her own share of dreams and frustrations," in Jade Castro's "Endo."

"Endo" also took home the Special Jury Prize for "its revealing take on the lives of 'end-of-contract' casual workers in the retail and service sector." The Best Editing award was given to "Endo" editor JD Domingo.

Aureaus Solito was named Best Director for his work on "Pisay," which tells of the struggles of eight students of Philippine Science High School during the politically volatile '80s.

"Pisay" also won the Best Production Design award for Martin Masadao, Regie Regalado, Dante Garcia and Hai Balbuena.

Best cinematography

Rodolfo Aves Jr. won the Best Cinematography award for "Kadin" (The Goat), a film by Adolf Alix Jr. shot entirely on Batanes Island.

The film's delivery of "effective aural [content] correlative to the beauty and poetry of a very remote island in the Philippines," won for Jerrold Tarog the Best Original Musical Score trophy.

Dennis Marasigan, Nikki Torres and Mara Paulina Marasigan received the Best Screenplay award for their work on "Tukso." They were commended for "an engaging multilevel storyline that effectively unfolds a mystery while revealing character."

Alvin Yapan's "Rolyo," a story set in Bicol where it is a practice to surround farmlands with film negative to ward off birds eating newly sown seeds, bagged the Best Short Film award.

Special jury prize

"Nineball," a short film by Enrico Aragon, was given the Special Jury Prize for its "hilarious and satiric take on the national pastime, billiards, and its engaging characterization."

"Gabon (Cloud)" taken from an old Maranao lullaby, won for Emman de la Cruz the Best Short Film Director award. He was cited for his "very effective and competent depiction of a Muslim belief and phenomenon that has a transcendental impact and a resonance across cultures."

Vic Acedillo Jr., who wrote and directed "To Ni," bagged the Best Screenplay award on account of the film's "engaging focus on a boy's relationship with the Sto. Niño icon and its engaging take on how the sacred permeate the everyday and the ordinary."

The Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival awards show was held at the Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo of the Cultural Center of the Philippines in Pasay City.

Corrections

IN THE JULY 23 ISSUE, an Entertainment article on Page F6—"Cinemalaya 2007 reels off"—misstated the name of the dance group that performed during the opening ceremony of this year's Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival. The performers were members of Footworks Dance Theater from De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde—not Ballet Philippines. The caption of one of the photographs accompanying the article contained the same error.

* * *

IN THE JULY 28 ISSUE, a story on Page A11 carried the erroneous headline—"GMA still hopeful for peaceful solution." According to the story, it's former President Corazon Aquino—not incumbent President Macapagal-Arroyo—who is hoping for a peaceful solution to the Basilan conflict.

* * *

IN EARLY EDITIONS of the July 30 issue, a front-page story—"Priest heals through power of touch"—misstated that the President's husband Jose Miguel Arroyo had a "miraculous" recovery last year. Mike Arroyo underwent successful open heart surgery in April.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Inquirer announces 5 journalism scholars

From page A1

The new INQUIRER scholars are Dianne Claire Jiao, Royce de la Cruz and John Mark Tuazon of UP, Joanna Batac of UST and Gilbert Monge of UE.

The five students were selected after a rigorous process that included an intelligence exam, a writing test, a psychological-personality test and a panel interview.

The INQUIRER will pay the tuition and other enrollment fees of the scholars, a monthly stipend of P1,000 and a semestral book and school supplies allowance of P1,500.

A scholar has to maintain a semestral average of 1.75 (87 or B+) and shall have no grade in any academic subject lower than 2.0 (85 or B). In case the scholar fails to meet the semestral average or violates the disciplinary rules of his or her university or is found guilty of a crime by a court during the scholarship term, the INQUIRER shall have the right to terminate the scholarship.

In case the scholar discontinues his or her studies for any reason other than force majeure or a serious illness as certified by a government doctor, he or she shall reimburse the INQUIRER the tuition and other fees, the monthly stipend and the allowance for books and school supplies.

The INQUIRER shall have the right of first refusal in the employment of the scholar after his or her completion of the academic course.

The INQUIRER University Scholarship Program was instituted in 1993 principally to help talented students obtain degrees in mass communication or journalism.

52 scholars

The program helps build a pool of graduates from which the INQUIRER could recruit reporters, researchers and editorial production assistants. To date, 52 students have been awarded the university scholarship, including 44 from UP, three from Ateneo de Manila University, four from UST and two from UE.

Of the 52 scholars, 21 were employed by the INQUIRER in various capacities—13 as reporters, three as editorial production assistants and five as researchers.

Ruel de Vera, an Ateneo graduate who belonged to the first (1993-'95) batch of scholars, is now the associate editor of the Sunday Inquirer Magazine and head of the PDI Book Division.

Lourd de Veyra (UST, Batch 1994-'95) is the bandleader of the Radioactive Sago Project, considered one of the country's most exciting jazz-punk-funk-rock band. A Palanca Awardee, he works as copyeditor, columnist and writer for several monthly glossy magazines.

After working as reporters of the INQUIRER for about seven years, Blanche Rivera and Philip Tubeza (UP, Batch 1997-'99) are now writing for a publication in Hong Kong.

Jamie Rose Alarcon (UP, Batch 2002-'04), a former reporter, is now a lecturer at Kalayaan College, corporate business trainer of iTi Consulting Inc. and writer of Wedding Essentials and Wedding Essentials Destination magazines. She was the campaign coordinator of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (Asia-Pacific) from June to December 2006.

Edson Tandoc (UP, Batch 2001-'03) resigned recently as INQUIRER reporter to take advantage of a scholarship at Nanyang University in Singapore where he will work for a master of arts degree in communication.

Mel Lawrence de Guzman (UP, Batch 2003-'05), a research assistant, resigned recently to work with the Opus Dei.

Jerald Uy (UP, Batch 2005-'07) is now a reporter of GMA-7. Patricia de Leon (UP, Batch 2004-'06) is an online writer of GMA-7.

Charlene Tordesillas (UP, Batch 2002-'04) worked briefly as editorial production assistant of the Lifestyle section before resigning to join the government.

The other former PDI scholars who are still working at the INQUIRER are reporters Norman Bordadora, Michael Lim Ubac, Jerome Aning, Leila Salaverria, Abigail Ho, Tarra Quismundo, Dewey Joseph Yap and Julie Aurelio; editorial production assistants Emman Von Cena and Mary Ann Rañola; and researchers Cyril Bonabente, Angeli Kate Pedroso and Alda Franz Quodala. Eliza Victoria (UP, Batch 2005-'07) is joining the INQUIRER as a researcher next month.

TULOY BA ANG REPORMA?

A Call for Agrarian Reform and Social Accountability

On January 28, 2007, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines spoke wisely when it said in its pastoral statement entitled, "Dignity of the Rural Poor – A Gospel Concern,"

"The greater number of our poor are in the rural areas... The one big effort of the government at alleviating rural poverty has been its ongoing land reform program, the CARP (Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program)... We ask that the CARP, defective as it is, be finally completed next year as it has been targeted. And if it is not sufficiently implemented by then, the program should be further extended and funded more seriously and generously. But we ask that the law itself must be reviewed and improved."

On June 15, 2007, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo announced she will certify as urgent a bill seeking to extend the life of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) for another decade.

On July 7, 2007, some of us were part of the delegation of 20 individuals from POs, NGOs and academe who met with PGMA Arroyo and presented three key concerns with appropriate policy proposals: (1) CARP extension with reforms and program financing beyond 2008, (2) Agrarian justice and human rights issues; and (3) Objections to the 19 RP-China agribusiness agreements which contravene the spirit of CARP and food security.

On July 16, 2007, PGMA stressed that she will push for the continuance of CARP as this was started by her father, former President Diosdado Macapagal.

On July 23, 2007, at the State of the Nation Address, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo said:

"The Departments of Agriculture, Agrarian Reform, and Environment and Natural Resources will devote 30% of their program budgets to Mindanao. DAR will move to Davao... Dapat maging daan sa tagumpay sa agribusiness ang reporma sa lupa. Done right, reform will democratize success, as Ramon Magsaysay and Diosdado Macapagal envisioned... We must reform agrarian reform so it can transform beneficiaries into agribusinessmen and other agribusiness women."

Madam President

Our friends in the NGO-PO Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ARRD) community and the Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs) had expected a clearer statement on CARP extension with reforms. Your SONA statement on agrarian reform has spawned a battle of interpretation: Was the ambiguity reflective of pressure from vested interests? Tuloy pa rin ba ang CARP o hindi?

We join the advocacy and call of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), the NGO-PO ARRD community, Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries and Department of Agrarian Reform employees:

ITULOY NATIN!

Basic Sectors Forum – National Anti-Poverty Commission

Romeo Rubion, Vic Ojano, Hili Morandarte (Farmers and Landless Rural Workers) ● Rogelio Amatorio, Jr. (Artisanal Fisherfolk) ● Artiso Mandawa (Indigenous Peoples) ● Ric Domingo, Joy Jarabelo (Urban Poor) ● Johnny dela Cruz (Senior Citizens) ● Alejandro Villaviza (Formal Labor) ● Oscar Francisco (NGO/Former Vice Chair for the Basic Sectors) ● Alex Macantual (Children) ● Josephine Parilla (Workers in the Informal Sector) ● Deborah Cabanag, Marlon Cornelio (Youth and Students)

"Those who make peaceful revolution impossible
Will make violent revolution inevitable"
Robert F. Kennedy

Senate prioritizes energy panel to address power crisis

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE SENATE WILL FORM ITS ENERGY COMmittee this week in order to start pubic hearings to address the looming power crisis.

"We have to rush its formation ahead of the other committees because the power crisis needs to be tackled immediately," said Senate President Manuel Villar in an interview with the INQUIRER.

Earlier, Villar said it could take up to three weeks before all the Senate committees are filled.

Villar cited the rising frequency of brownouts in Metro Manila over the past few weeks as an ominous sign of a power crisis brought about by the unusually long dry spell.

In a statement, Sen. Francis Escudero said immediate attention to the problem was needed to avoid falling into the same power predicament that the country faced in the 1990s.

At the time, government was forced to enter into expensive long-term power supply contracts with private suppliers to end eight to 10-hour daily brownouts. This is the reason the country now has one of the highest power rates in the region, it has been perennially pointed out.

There is an urgent need to determine the causes of this new crisis, whether man-made or natural, so that they can be addressed accordingly, Escudero said.

Escudero blamed the government's lack of foresight and planning for the looming crisis. There are no contingency plans, he said.

People can't catch pig virus, says DOH

HUMANS CANNOT CATCH THE HOG cholera virus (HCV), the Department of Health said yesterday.

"On the public health stand, human beings are not susceptible to hog cholera virus infection. The public can eat properly cooked pork, provided that it has gone through the National Meat Inspection Committee's (NMIC) process of examination and has been deemed safe for public consumption," said a DOH advisory.

The DOH also encouraged the NMIC to intensify its campaign against meat dealers who sell products that had not been inspected by the NMIC.

The hog cholera virus, otherwise known as classical swine fever, is a specific viral disease of pigs and wild boar and does not affect other species.

Last week, the presence of the virus in hog meat from Bulacan was reported, causing an increase in chicken prices as consumers abstained from buying pork.

The DOH said HCV was a highly contagious viral disease of swine that could be prevented through standard farm precautions.

Transmission among pigs occurs mostly by the oral route, but airborne transmission cannot be discounted in mechanically ventilated hog houses. *Allison W. Lopez*

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Lapus told: Neri ...

From page A1

yesterday to try and dispel official confusion caused by a new presidential executive order creating the position of a presidential assistant to help solve the crisis gripping the education sector.

It said that Romulo Neri, newly designated chair of the Commission on Higher Education (CHEd), would concentrate on the special assignment given him by President Macapagal-Arroyo and would not stray into the turf of Education Secretary Jesli Lapus.

Who the new presidential assistant for education would be remained unknown.

"A name was mentioned by President Arroyo, but I'm not at liberty to divulge it at the moment," Cerge Remonde, the head of the presidential management staff, told the INQUIRER.

Remonde stressed that Neri, as CHEd chair replacing Carlito Puno, would not be encroaching on the functions of Lapus, who is in charge of elementary and high school education.

"Neri will focus on higher education," said Remonde, referring to the administration of private and state colleges and universities across the country.

Remonde also sought to allay concerns that tapping a presidential assistant would blur the lines of authority in the education sector.

He said that "the presidential assistant is only a liaison" between the Department of Education, CHEd and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda).

Remonde made it clear that the presidential assistant would not be on top of the heads of the three education bodies who all hold Cabinet rank.

News of the transfer of Neri from his position as head of the National Economic Development Authority (Neda) to CHEd chair has been all over the radio since the weekend.

DzBB even created a jingle to tease Lapus.

Remonde clarified that Neri's transfer to CHEd was part of "continuing, not a one-time wholesale revamp" of the Cabinet.

"You can't rule out (a revamp in the Cabinet)," Remonde said. "That's part of dynamic leadership and dynamic governance. You really have to make continuous adjustments in the bureaucracy to make the bureaucracy more responsive to the challenges and the needs of the times."

Neri's gameplan

Neri has denied he will hold the post of presidential assistant which was created by Executive Order No. 632 signed by Ms Arroyo on July 10.

Neri said in a phone interview yesterday that one of his priorities was to align college education with the needs of the economy.

For this, he plans to consult with business and industry sectors to learn what type of graduates are needed.

He said that, offhand, there is a need for a wide array of skills, including engineering, accounting, medical transcription and even animation.

Neri said he also plans to consult with the CHEd as a collective body to know the specific directions to take.

"We will not implement changes for the sake of effecting changes, but we'll see what's needed," he said.

Curriculum changes

Neri said his specific marching orders from Ms Arroyo were not yet very clear since their talk had been short.

Neri is also set to review the quality of the present college curriculum. He said he wanted to create a better teaching curriculum for colleges and universities to assure higher employability for Filipino college graduates.

Neri said his gameplan also included improving the implementation of the ladderized curriculum in higher education under Executive Order No. 358.

Ms Arroyo, in 2004, signed EO 358 to enable college students to credit vocational and technical skills training toward a college degree to enable them to land jobs. This would support Ms Arroyo's agenda of creating 6 to 10 million jobs during her administration.

Neri said the changes he was targeting were very basic, pointing out that these "should've been there from the start."

Science, math

Lapus told reporters the education sector was most in need of science and math graduates at its present state of development.

He said most developing countries were shown to need a big ratio of science- and math-skilled graduates to fuel economic growth.

Lapus said he welcomed Neri's appointment at CHEd and that he had assured Neri of support in his work at CHEd.

He noted, however, that at present the DepEd had no oversight functions over CHEd.

Remonde said Neri's transfer to CHEd would address the worsening "mismatch" in the higher education sector.

"To solve that mismatch, we have to rec rient our education system, particularly higher education," to technical-vocational courses, he said.

Ending the mismatch

Asked about the gravity of the problem, Neri said in an interview last weekend that the country had many unemployed college graduates, numbering about 1 million.

He said the "special assignment" given him by Ms Arroyo concerned the mismatch between the job demands of the market and available manpower resources.

"We want to make sure the college graduates are matched with the requirements of the industry," he said.

Neri has said he intends to stay at CHEd for about six months after which he will return to his old post at Neda.

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Low water for folks in high places

RESIDENTS OF ELEVATED AREAS in Metro Manila's west zone concession area will be the first to feel the effects of any reduction in the water supply, Maynilad Water Services Inc. said yesterday.

Maynilad said its water production output may be reduced by 4 percent in the near future if water levels in the dams serving the metropolis' needs continue to decline.

"If the rains do not come and the Angat Dam level continues to decrease and there is no sufficient water runoff at the Ipo and La Mesa Dams watershed areas, Maynilad's water production will likely be reduced from the average output of 2,260 million liters per day (mld) to as low as 2,170 mld," said Diosdado Samia, who heads the firm's water production unit.

"When this happens, the elevated areas of the West Zone will be the first to be affected, through reduced water availability and pressure," the company said in a statement.

To prepare for this eventuality, the company said that it had put in place contingency measures to maximize the use of available water.

These measures include the deployment of water tankers, putting up stationery water tanks, valve adjustments to optimize water output, rotation of water supply, and the intensification of the campaign to cut off illegal connections, repair leaks and disconnect service to residents with arrears of 60 days or more.

While the water level in Angat Dam has been decreasing until its last monitored level on Sunday, the water runoff from the watershed areas of Ipo and La Mesa Dams "have been sufficient to maintain the operational level of the two dams," Samia said.

This, in turn, has provided Maynilad with the normal supply of raw water to enable it to maintain the normal production volume of its La Mesa Treatment Plants I and II.

The company urged its customers in the West Zone to practice water conservation measures to help ease the effects of the water crisis.

Despite the drop in water levels in Angat Dam, Maynilad said that water supply to its customers remained normal as of yesterday.

Daxim L. Lucas

Cutback harder on CL farmers

From page A1

the use of available water in the dam.

"With the cutback, what will be greatly affected is irrigation. That's our immediate concern," NWRB Executive Director Ramon Alikpala said.

But if worse comes to worst—if the dry spell continues and the water level in Angat further dips next month—both the farmers and the Metro Manila residents would bear the brunt, he said.

Alikpala said households in the metropolis should not be immediately concerned. "We haven't reached a point where they should be concerned. Nevertheless, it shouldn't also mean that we should not talk about conserving," he said.

The NWRB reduced the water supply for 15,000 hectares of irrigated farms in Bulacan and Pampanga from 32 cubic meters per second to 25 cu m/sec through the National Irrigation Administration (NIA).

It also cut back the supply for 12 million residents in the metropolis from 43 cu m/sec to 41 cu m/sec through the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS).

The cutback was prompted by the prolonged dry spell in Luzon that has lowered the water levels in several dams, cut down the power generated by hydroelectric plants, and caused brownouts.

San Roque Dam

In San Manuel, Pangasinan, the water level in the San Roque Dam's reservoir has dropped to near its critical level, forcing engineers to conserve its supply.

Engineer Antonio Arnaldo of San Roque Power Corp.'s operations department said the company shut down its power generation facility for three days last week, from Friday to Sunday, to conserve water and collect rainwater.

The facility, however, started generating power yesterday on a limited scale, he said.

Laguna Lake

The Laguna Lake's water level has also declined.

The lake's water elevation is lower than what is expected during the rainy season, according to the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA).

"It should be at 11.5 meters, but the rain is not continuous so the water is stagnant at 11 meters," said Emil Hernandez, officer in charge of the LLDA's Integrated Water Resources Division.

For the past few days, the eastern part of the Laguna province has experienced rains. But it was not enough to raise the water to the desired level, Hernandez said.

Laguna Lake, which is bounded by Manila, Rizal, Laguna and Cavite provinces, is the country's largest brackish water lake with a surface area of 900 square kilometers.

LLDA estimates that there are more than 10 million people who depend on the lake's ecosystem. People depend on it for food, irrigation, transportation, floodwater reservoir and industrial cooling, among others.

Many people living within the watershed depend on the lake for food. High commercial value fish are milk fish or *bangus*, tilapia, carp, Thai catfish or *hito*, *ayungin*, and *biya*. There are about 269 species of plants, fishes and various kinds of aquatic organisms.

Hernandez said the farming communities around the lake's shoreline would be affected by the low water level. He noted that those who get their irrigation water from the lake would not be able to use the water because of its higher salinity content.

Most of the communities around the lake plant fast-growing vegetables like beans and root crops. Some also plant rice in the villages around the shoreline, according to Hernandez.

With the cutback of water supply from Angat Dam, there will be less water to irrigate farms in Bulacan and Pampanga, according to Jorge Estioco of the NWRB Angat Dam monitoring division.

"If there's old standing water there, maybe it's just adequate to flood the fields. If the standing water before was 4 cm, it would be lower in the coming days," he said.

Farms nearly dry

After the two-month-long dry spell, some farms in San Ildefonso, Bulacan, were "nearly dry," the NWRB said, citing NIA field reports.

To offset the cutback, the NIA could resort to motor-powered shallow tube wells to irrigate farms in Central Luzon, while the MWSS could conduct revalving or supply water to an area one at a time, according to NWRB.

But the worst is yet to come.

If the same weather persisted and the water level in Angat further dipped next month, the water supply for irrigation in Central Luzon would be cut off, and the water supply for residents in the metropolis would be further cut down.

"If this weather persists, it means the supply for irrigation would be stopped. Some 15,000 families are living off these farms. It will also mean the dam may not recover for the next cropping season, which means they might not be able to plant the next season," Alikpala said.

Water rationing

Alikpala said this would lead to a further cutback in the amount of water being supplied to households in the metropolis.

"We're now talking about water that will be rationed. If they get it 24 hours, they might get much less, or there may be days when they don't get water at all," he said.

The weather outlook for next month remains "grim," with rainfall expected to be below normal, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration.

"But the possibility of this one-month rainfall outlook getting altered is always there," Pagasa weather forecasting chief Nathaniel Cruz said.

There's a typhoon hovering over the Pacific Ocean, but it's not expected to enter the Philippine area of responsibility, he said.

Up by 5 cm

Downpours in Metro Manila over the weekend, triggered by the government's cloud-seeding operations, increased the water level in Angat Dam by 5 cm, according to NWRB officials.

As of yesterday morning, the water level in Angat Dam was 172.14 meters above sea level, less than 8 m below the normal operating level of 180 m.

If this further dropped to 170 m, a level at which the main turbines processing water for irrigation in Central Luzon could get severely damaged, this could force the government to cut off the water supply for irrigation.

"If the water level is below 180 m, this could bog down the turbines. There's a certain limit for machines," Estioco said.

"If we hit 170 m, the air gets mixed up with water. This causes friction and heat. That destroys the turbines. So if we hit 170 m, the turbines might be shut down," he added.

Divert water from Ipo Dam

If that happens, finding an alternative source for irrigation in Central Luzon would be a "problem" for the government, Estioco said.

"But maybe, it's possible to divert water from Ipo Dam," he said.

Unlike the main turbines, the auxiliary turbines that process water for Metro Manila residents could still operate even if the water level is 160 m because they are built at a lower elevation, Estioco said.

"At 160 m, they can still be used," he said.

Waiting for typhoons

At this time of the year, San Roque Power Corp. in Pangasinan should be discharging excess water from its dam to accommodate more rainwater brought about by typhoons or washed down from the Cordillera uplands.

With the limited water supply at the reservoir, the plant could generate electricity for only eight hours, at 95 megawatts (MW) per hour, Arnaldo said.

But how long the plant can generate power will depend on how much rain will fall in the coming days, he said.

The plant can generate power for 24 hours at 360 MW per hour if there is adequate water supply in its reservoir, he said.

"We are waiting for typhoons or even just heavy rains. [These are] most welcome now," he said.

Water level in San Roque Dam was recorded at 226.47 meters at 8 a.m. Monday, more than a meter above its minimum level of 225 meters, due to rains in the area.

Isabela

In Isabela, the cloud-seeding operation in the province on Saturday and Sunday did not help increase the water level in Magat Dam.

Saturnino Tenedero, dam instrumentation section chief, said the water level at the reservoir was 162.47 meters on Monday, down from the 163.5-meter elevation recorded on Saturday. *With a report from Villamor Visaya Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon*

CHILDREN play in the rain during a sudden downpour on Friday in Manila. Authorities have resorted to cloud-seeding to induce rain amid a continuing dry spell in the middle of the traditional wet season. AP

Waste not, want not: Save water

By TJ Burgonio

THE ECOWASTE COALITION has drawn up water conservation tips in view of the prolonged dry spell:

- Report water losses, such as burst pipes and open hydrants to the proper authorities.
- Fix leaky water pipes, dripping faucets or toilet tanks immediately.
- Repair or replace defective washers, connectors, hoses or other faulty parts.
- Install water-saving faucets.
- Use a water-saving shower head. The ultra-low-flow version delivers high comfort for only half the water normally used.
- Avoid flushing the toilet unnecessarily. Put discarded tissues in the bin rather than in the toilet bowl.
- Don't let the water run while shaving, brushing your teeth or soaping your hands or face.
- Shorten your shower time, turn off the tap when soaping and don't use more water than you need.
- Organize your laundry schedule and wait until you've got a full load before you use the washing machine.
- Save laundry water to rinse used bottles, cans and otherrecyclables, wash blinds and rugs, flush toilet, wash car wheels, or clean the driveway.
- Never let water go down the drain when there may be other uses for it.
- Filter gray water from sinks and showers and use it to water the lawn, clean the sidewalk and for other purposes.

"We should use the water left over from washing clothes to water our plants. It doesn't kill the plants but kills the ants," said Severino Galino, cochair of Sagip-Pasig Movement, a member of EcoWaste.

EcoWaste's other tips were:

- Do not waste gallons of water hosing down your driveway or footpath. Use a broomstick to sweep the place.
- Wash your car the natural way—wait until it rains.
- Use a pan or bowl of water when scrubbing or peeling fruits and vegetables rather than let the tap run.
- Save water used to wash fruits and vegetables for rinsing dirty dishes or for watering plants.
- Don't use running water to thaw meat or other frozen foods. Thaw frozen stuff in the refrigerator overnight.
- When boiling water, fill the kettle with just enough for your needs.
- Use fewer cooking utensils and dishes to cut down on the water needed for dish washing.
- Don't rinse dishes under a running tap. Use a basin.
- Water wisely; don't over water the plants.
- Work with your barangay in implementing a water conservation program not only during the summer months, but all year-round.
- And lastly, protect watersheds from all forms of contamination.

Resist polluting human activities such as the dumping or land filling of wastes, especially in watershed areas, water bodies and other environmentally critical areas.

MJ's aim: Baptize 1M kids thousands at a time

By TJ Burgonio

IT WAS ONE FOR THE BOOKS, AND THE parishioners of St. Joseph Parish Church in Tondo would have been doubly pleased if someone from the Guinness Book of Records had been around to document it.

Throughout the morning of Saturday, the church on a busy street in Gagalangin teemed with parents cradling their infants in pink dresses and light blue shirts, all of them clutching candles.

In a record of sorts for the parish, and perhaps elsewhere in the country, four "guest priests" baptized 1,126 babies and children of school age in three separate Masses that lasted nearly four hours.

The priests thought there would be no end to it. "It was beautiful," Fr. Rowen Carlos said in an interview while catching a little rest in a room adjacent to the altar in between Masses, "but taxing."

The crowd spilled into the church yard, where they were shaded by a large white tent that had been erected for them.

Traffic crawled to a stop in front of the church on Juan Luna Street and motorists couldn't have missed the banner above the fence that read: "Binyagan ng Barangay Handog ng Hulog ng Langit Foundation Inc."

Hulog ng Langit is, of course, the foundation of former Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez, more popularly known as MJ.

The ex-lawmaker, who returned to the country in late 2005 and has hogged the headlines for his charity work as well as his family problems, is targeting one million children for baptism.

So far, some 22,000 children have been christened under the foundation's program.

Way of helping

"The idea came from Mark Jimenez. According to him, it's one of his ways of helping out in the pastoral program of the church," said Carlos, 35, a newly ordained priest who grew up in Gagalangin.

He added: "Whatever his motivation, he's performing his Christian mission to help the less-fortunate [be baptized, a] sacrament which sometimes is not accessible to them."

Jimenez, clad in a light blue long-sleeved shirt and white slacks, turned up at the Mass for the third batch of babies and children just after 11 a.m. and mingled with the crowd.

Pedicab driver Rogelio Segunda, 31, and his wife Analyn brought their children Ronalyn, 4, Gently, 2, and one-year-old Angelo to the church for this "rare opportunity" at having them christened at no cost to them.

"We've long waited for this," Rogelio said, as Gently lay on his lap.

According to the parish staff, Jimenez broached the idea of a mass baptism more than a month ago. He picked up the tab consisting of a P400 baptismal fee per child and the cost of the pink dresses, blue shirts and shoes for the children.

His staff at Hulog ng Langit also prepared a reception at a basketball court at the St. Joseph School, right beside the church, and handed out packed lunches to the parents and their children.

Downplaying the event

"We didn't think twice about it. We signed up even if there was nobody to stand as godparents to our children," said Jocelyn Cumpa, 36.

Cumpa brought her children Jogielyn, 8, and Angelo, 4, to be baptized.

Jimenez, 60, tried to downplay the event, but admitted that the "call" to organize something like this came to him when he was imprisoned in the United States for 27 months in 2003-2005 for tax fraud and making illegal campaign contributions to the Democratic Party. He had said he was reformed by the harsh prison life.

'NEARER MY GOD TO THEE.' Over 1,000 infants and children from Tondo have Mark Jimenez for their godfather after he sprang for their baptism, a fruit of the conversion he said he experienced while imprisoned in the US.

RODEL ROTONI

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, July 31, 2007
17th Week in Ordinary Time
Ignatius of Loyola

1st Reading: Ex 33:7-11; 34:5-9, 28
Gospel: Matthew 13:36-43

Jesus sent the crowds away and went into the house. And his disciples came to him saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field." He answered them, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world; the good seed are the people of the Kingdom; the weeds are those who follow the evil one. The enemy who sows them is the devil; the harvest is the end of time and the workers are the angels.

"Just as the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so will it be at the end of time. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom all that is scandalous and all who do evil. And these will be thrown in the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the just will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. If you have ears, then hear."

Commentary

Moses and the people worship at the tent where the glory of the Lord comes to rest in a cloud. The people stand at the entrance to their tents and worship while Moses speaks to God. He begs God to come along in his company. And even though the people are stiff-necked, he begs for pardon for them all and asks God to still receive them as his people. And after the peoples' worship of the idol, Moses stays with God for 40 days, fasting and praying and fashioning another set of tablets of the law. Always it is about the mercy, kindness, patience, and God's love for his people as against the peoples' unfaithfulness and lack of awe or fear of God.

The disciples seek out Jesus apart from the crowds and ask him for explanations for his parables. He speaks of the Word that he preaches, the good news of God's presence, power in the kingdom of justice and peace that he brings to them, and how there are weeds sown in abundance alongside the gospel—hatred, jealousy, bitterness, refusal to forgive, exclusion, lack of care for the poor. They grow together and at the end there will be judgment and recompense, each according to their deeds. There will be those who will give up their faith, those who will be affected by others' faith and will be weakened/harmed. But there will also be those who shine like the sun in the Father's kingdom. Where shall we be found? Is the seed alive and growing in us?

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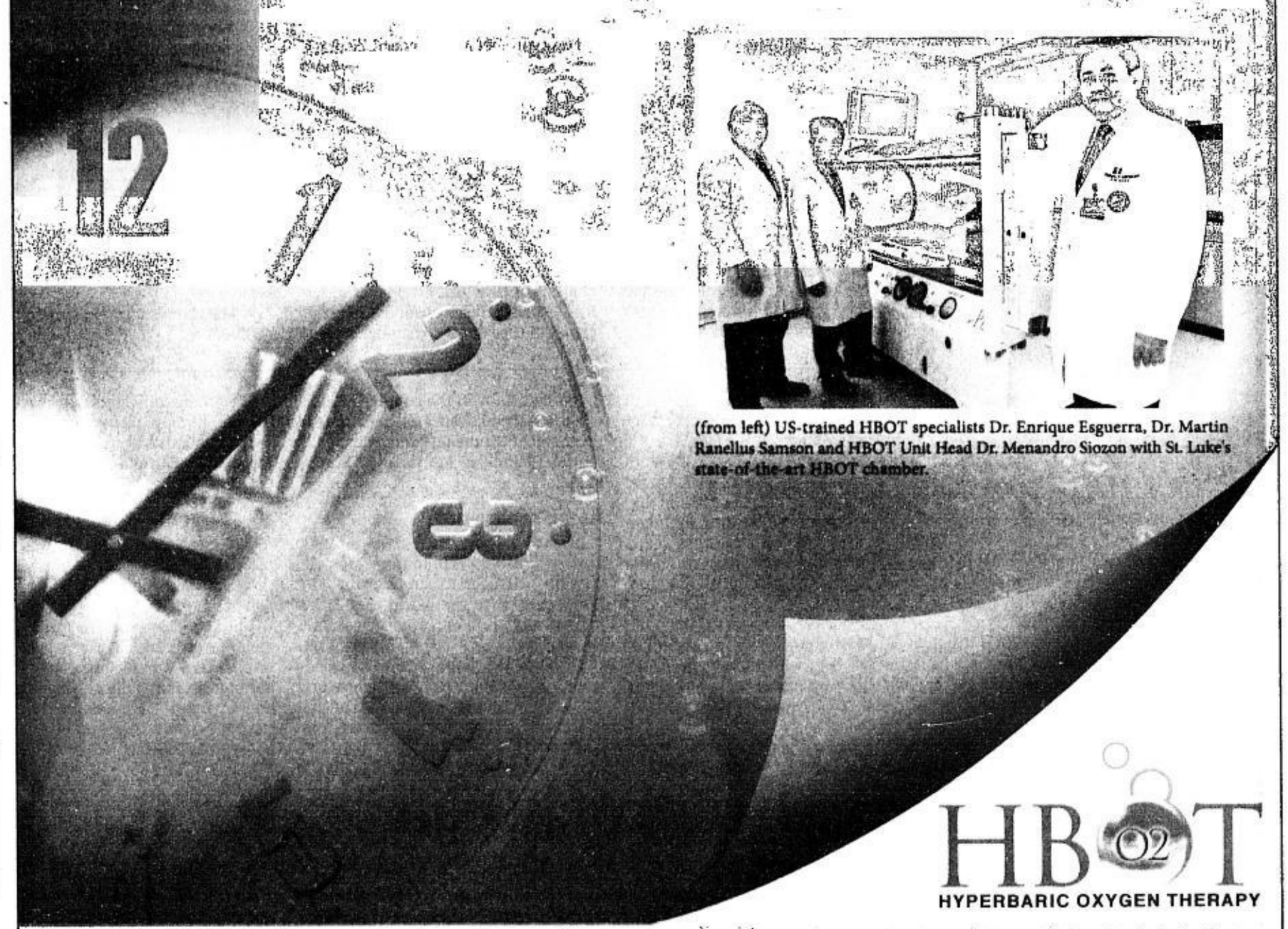

(from left) US-trained HBOT specialists Dr. Enrique Esguerra, Dr. Martin Ranellus Samson and HBOT Unit Head Dr. Menandro Siozon with St. Luke's state-of-the-art HBOT chamber.

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2020 vision for Asean not good enough for GMA

By Michael Lim Ubac

PUSHING FOR "ONE SINGLE, UNITED front," President Macapagal-Arroyo formally opened the 40th Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Ministerial Meeting (AMM) yesterday at the Philippine International Convention Center with a call for Asian leaders "to set the course for our region."

In her keynote speech, Ms Arroyo, who currently holds the chairmanship of Asean, stressed the importance of Asean shifting to a regional bloc similar to the European Union by 2015 instead of 2020.

"Once more we are gathered to set the course for our region. It is the time in our history when we have made international relations a centerpiece of our economic agenda," she said, calling on the foreign ministers to take advantage of the stronger relations, from bilateral to multilateral, of regional members.

Ms Arroyo said Asean leaders and their constituents were engaged "in our never-ending saga" of cooperation, solidarity, fighting poverty and winning collective security.

She called on the Asean foreign ministers to speed up regional cooperation in the areas of political, security, economic and sociocultural advancement.

Ms Arroyo recalled that during the Asean summit in Cebu in January, regional leaders took up several important steps that put the region squarely on the path to creating a regional community by 2015.

"At a time of uncertainty in the world, Asean took a bold step forward by endorsing an Asean charter that will expand and strengthen Asean," she said.

The President stressed that her fellow leaders "seized the moment in history to do the right thing" by issuing a declaration on the Asean charter.

Short cuts, quick fixes

"That Asean brought so many nations and leaders together to discuss peace, security and social justice, and economic growth is a testament to the desire of leaders and their people for greater collaboration between nations."

Ms Arroyo conceded that building the envisioned Asean community was a long-term endeavor.

"There are no shortcuts and quick fixes, but we are determined and will persevere to build the community that will provide a more secure, stable and prosperous life for all people," she said.

"Our collective desire to bring social justice, economic opportunity and integrated security to the region is our common ground. The declaration of the Asean charter is a testament to our commitment to become one single, united front."

Ms Arroyo wanted a regional community to be anchored on economic integration with the focus on social justice and raising the standard of living of the poor in the region.

Dialogue partners

"To that end, developing Asean is more that creating a regional community. It is about creating a dynamic force in Asia to maximize the benefits of globalization."

Ms Arroyo said Asean was actively strengthening its economic linkages not only within the region but also with its dialogue partners including Japan, China, South Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand.

"For Asean to become a true, expanding union, it must continue to nurture its relations especially with key partners—China, Japan and South Korea. Deepening integration on this level would mean completing and eventually forging the individual free trade agreements Asean is currently working out with these plus three countries," she said.

She reported that the free trade agreement (FTA) between Asean and China, and Asean and Korea, were moving into their final stages.

"It is now up to the individual Asean countries to individually ratify the two FTAs. Negotiation on the FTA with Japan also holds a lot of promise. We hope that those involved in the negotiations will find the resolve to agree on the finer points of the draft FTA," she said.

Ms Arroyo also pointed to the "rise" of China and India as major economic powers, which provided Asean with fresh competition as well as cooperation.

"But the WTO's (World Trade Organization) Doha development round has stalled making it more difficult to agree on global trade rules but also underscoring the importance of regional arrangements to maintain the pace of our trading growth."

"We have demonstrated our collective voice through our call in support of reviving and revising the Doha round. We have called for the round to expand global trade and investment for the benefit of all," she said.

At the time in the world when there are strains in alliances from Iraq to WTO, she said it was essential that "new vital alliances will be forged to keep the world stable and strong, some sort of East Asia Community will be a bold step in that direction."

"The question isn't whether an East Asia community is necessary. The question is will we be stronger with a more united region. I believe the answer that is clear—each member nation and the entire region will benefit."

Romulo challenges Asean to continue to be a potent force

By Cynthia D. Balana

FOREIGN SECRETARY ALBERTO ROMULO yesterday challenged the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations and its dialogue partners to sustain its ability to influence the course of events in the Asia-Pacific region and the rest of the world.

In a speech marking the opening of the two-day 40th Asean Ministerial Meetings at the Philippine International Convention Center, Romulo cited Asean as a potent force for progress, peace and stability in the region for the last 40 years.

Romulo said that the members' ability to adapt, to evolve, and to reengineer Asean was a unique organizational strength that had kept them in step with new demands, inside and outside the region.

"We have brought all 10 nations of Southeast Asia under a single Asean roof. We have used regional cooperation to promote growth, development and integration. We have earned the respect and recognition of countries and organizations, regionally and globally," he said.

He said that while the European Union was forged from the ashes of World War II, Asean was formed in the midst of the Cold War and the challenges of decolonization.

"Indeed, Asean has ensured that the emerging architecture of our region cannot be designed or constructed without our active consent and collaboration. By any standard or measure, therefore, Asean stands out as one of the most successful regional groups that have emerged in the developing world," he said.

Romulo said the decisions taken during 12th Asean Summit in Cebu last year have set the future course of Asean that must be pursued at the AMM, which will be followed by the Post Ministerial Conferences and the 14th Asean Regional Forum.

"Our vision of a regional community is a comprehensive one. It is built on three, mutually reinforcing pillars : an Asean Security Community, an Asean Economic Community and an Asean Socio-Cultural Community," he said.

Asean OKs human rights commission

From page A1

closed doors at the Philippine International Convention Center, had instructed the task force to include this provision in the draft charter.

"This is a historic decision. This is a victory for human rights," Romulo said in a press conference later in the evening.

"We believe there must be human rights body in Asean," he said, adding that it should be "functional and operational" the moment the draft charter is signed, as planned, in the next leaders' summit in Singapore this November.

Asked whether Asean member countries could still have the option not to be covered by the rights body, he said "I don't believe so" since by signing the Charter "they agreed to be bound by it."

"They all agreed. There is no doubt they agreed," he said.

In a joint communiqué issued last night, the Asean ministers also called for the "phased and calibrated withdrawal of foreign forces in Iraq" without specifying the US troops that have invaded the country to oust Iraqi strongman Saddam Hussein in 2003.

The military pullout, they said, "contributes toward bringing normalcy" in the war-torn Middle East nation.

"We voiced our deep concern over the continued stability in Iraq and reaffirmed our support for the Iraqi government and its efforts to ensure unity, security, stability and prosperity in Iraq," they added.

Details yet to be crafted

Romulo said what was agreed upon by the ministers was the "principle" of creating a human rights body, and that the terms of reference that will next be crafted on the matter will make it "more explicit" as to its function or composition.

Until yesterday's opening of the 40th AMM hosted by Manila, Burma, whose ruling junta had drawn criticism in and outside the region for its dismal human rights record, had been objecting to any mention of a human rights body in the proposed charter, according to diplomatic sources.

Asean's newest members Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam—which are under authoritarian or single-party governments—had also reportedly suggested they were not yet ready for the creation of such a body.

The inclusion of the provision setting up a rights body in the charter has been one of the thorny issues debated upon by the members of the task force headed by retired Philippine Ambassador Rosario Manalo.

Asean's relevance

In earlier pronouncements, Manalo said establishing a human rights commission "will keep Asean relevant" as it "announce(s) to the world that Asean honors its human rights commitments."

Through the body, she said, Asean would also be able to impart to the world its "(own) regional perspective on human rights amid much monitoring from outsiders."

A source confirmed that discussions on the human rights provision were very exhaustive at the level of the task force, with Burma being the most vocal. "But all that disappeared when it was elevated to the ministers," the source said.

The creation of the body was mainly pushed by the human rights commissions of the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand.

Until its functions are spelled out in greater detail, such a body is being widely seen as a formal venue or grievance mechanism that will hear complaints of human rights violations committed by state or nonstate forces in the region.

Asean has been criticized for being too soft on members with questionable human rights record, particularly Burma, which has been strongly censured for its slow moves to restore democracy and the continued house arrest of democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

Until Sunday, diplomats had said that Burma and some other countries had blocked the establishment of the commission.

Debate on consensus

Member states have also battled over whether to abandon their policy of operating on consensus in favor of taking decisions by vote—a move which would also amount to forcing individual countries to abide by group rules.

Romulo admitted that the task force had yet to iron out the voting issue.

On the issue of sanctions to be imposed against erring members, Singapore Foreign Minister George Yeo said the AMM decided to refer the matter to the Asean leaders.

"The leaders have a committee of peers to decide on their own method of coming into decision," he said.

Yeo said he was "very optimistic" that there would be an Asean charter by November.

Some Asean countries fear any scrutiny of their human rights record, and the group has traditionally held to a cardinal policy of noninterference in each other's affairs. Human rights groups have complained that this noninterference principle has fostered undemocratic governments in the region.

At their annual meeting, the foreign ministers were also expected to tackle terrorism, better enforcement of a regional antinuclear treaty, disaster management and ways to help poorer members catch up with wealthier ones to foster faster economic integration.

Highlights of Asean draft charter

HIGHLIGHTS OF A DRAFT OF A LANDmark charter being written by the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations to create a legal foundation, speed up decision-making and better respond to issues such as human rights violations and emergencies:

- Upholds the rule of law, good governance, nonaggression and democracy. Rejects unconstitutional regime changes.
- Reaffirms Asean's bedrock principle of noninterference in members' domestic affairs.
- Mandates establishment of a human rights body to protect and promote rights and fundamental freedoms in a region with widespread violations.
- Backs a decade-old treaty banning nuclear weapons in the region and prohibits all other weapons of mass destruction and interference by external powers.
- Fosters free trade, economic integration and the narrowing of the economic divide among member states.
- Empowers the region's heads of state, to be known collectively as the Asean Summit, as the bloc's highest policy-making officials. They are to meet twice instead of once a year, and could deal with emergencies.
- Retains the bloc's traditional decision-making by consensus but member states are studying other options, including voting on economic agreements and other crucial issues. One proposal is to allow a member state to be voluntarily absent during voting with the condition it would accept any decision reached.
- Accords a legal identity to Asean for international negotiations and transactions and calls for peaceful settlement of disputes among member states.
- Currently groups Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. Asean officials studying whether it could accept an 11th member, East Timor, in the future.
- Designates Aug. 8 each year as Asean day.
- The charter must be ratified by all members.

AP

Burma is 'black sheep' of Asean

From page A1

for participants in the 40th Asean Ministerial Meeting in Manila amid Burma's refusal to include a commission on human rights in a landmark charter that is being hammered out.

During the gathering, Romulo renewed Asean's plea to Burma to promote democracy in keeping with the spirit of Asean.

"While we recognize that Myanmar needs time and political space to deal with its complex challenges, Myanmar has to accelerate its national reconciliation and democratization," Romulo said.

"The world is looking to Myanmar to live up to its promises, and to Asean to encourage progressive development in our region, which must entail improvements in both human security and freedom," he said.

Yesterday, Burma dropped its objection to the setting up of a human rights commission, paving the way for its inclusion in the draft Asean charter and its approval in principle as the Asean foreign ministers began their two-day conference.

"We have agreed to establish a human rights body," said Singapore Foreign Minister George Yeo.

The document would be presented during the Asean summit in Singapore in November, which also will deal with the proposal to submit to voting vital issues confronting the regional bloc that has depended on unanimity on major decisions.

How unanimity stymies change

The deadlock over the setting up of the human rights commission showed how unanimity can stymie change—a single nation using the need for general agreement to block or water down proposals it doesn't like.

When Burma joined Asean a decade ago—over the objections of Western countries critical of its human rights record—the country appeared to be taking the first steps toward democracy, making it a good candidate for membership as its neighbors sought a unified bloc that could hold its own economically and politically against groups like the European Union.

Since then, Burma has turned into Asean's black sheep, ignoring international outcry over the continued house arrest of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi and producing little tangible progress in implementing a so-called road map to democracy that it says will lead to free elections.

Sense of impatience, frustration

"I sense there is some impatience, there is frustration" by some countries over Burma's lack of progress, Romulo told a news conference on Sunday night.

"There should be reconciliation of all the various factions so that this will benefit not only the people of Myanmar, but our own credibility as Asean would be enhanced," he said.

It's unlikely that Asean would admit Burma as a member today, given its recalcitrance, but expulsion also doesn't seem to be an option as other members hope that engaging the reclusive country is a better option than isolationism in nudging its generals toward lasting change.

Until that change comes, the rest of Asean has to try to find tangled ways to keep the negativity generated by Burma's regime to a minimum.

Burma gave up its turn at Asean's chairmanship last year after a number of the group's dialogue partners, which include the United States and the European Union, said they would not attend any regional meetings there.

Sanctions

The European Union has imposed economic and political sanctions on Burma, and its refusal to deal with the military-ruled nation held up the start of free-trade talks with Asean for more than two years.

"As far as Burma, or Myanmar, is concerned, we all see clearly that it's not very helpful what the government there is doing as far as Asean is concerned," Ambassador Axel Raimund Weishaupt of Germany said earlier this year as the European Union urged Burma's partners in Asean to be firmer with the junta.

Walden Bello, a left-leaning University of the Philippines sociology professor, said other Asean members also had a long way to go to be fully democratic, pointing out that Thailand was still waiting for elections nearly a year after a military coup, while Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia all had authoritarian governments.

The situation inside Burma has been a distraction at every Asean meeting since it cracked down on Suu Kyi and her National League for Democracy after they won general elections. But the country has been able to use Asean's policy of consensus to fend off moves that could have led to further criticism and action.

Efforts to democratize

Government-appointed advisers have said members that breach Asean's principles should have their rights and privileges suspended—or even be expelled in extreme cases. But the group has been unable to codify such sanctions, largely due to Burma's resistance and Asean's founding principle of noninterference by members in each other's internal affairs.

Asean's foreign ministers are to discuss Burma's efforts to democratize, according to a draft joint ministerial statement, which reserved a paragraph for the situation in the military-ruled nation.

But the wording of the paragraph was unlikely to be strong, with Burma pushing to water down the language. ***With reports from AP and AFP***

Investment fund manager says she was victim, too

By Tina G. Santos

DESPITE INVESTORS' CLAIMS THAT IT WAS she who enticed them to invest their money in the foreign exchange trading firm Performance Investment Products Corp. (PIPC), Cristina Gonzales-Tuason, the company's general manager, yesterday insisted that she too was a victim of the investment scam.

Accompanied by her two lawyers, Mario Bautista and Gener Ballesteros, Tuason appeared at the National Bureau of Investigation anti-organized crime division (AOCD) at 10 a.m. yesterday. She, however, refused to answer questions from the media.

"She's definitely a victim," Bautista told reporters, adding that his client went to the NBI in response to the subpoena issued by the bureau last Tuesday.

"We wish we knew," he said when asked if Tuason knew where Michael Liew, the Singaporean owner of PIPC who allegedly disappeared with at least $250 million of investor money, was.

"We were the ones who asked the NBI to look for Liew. We're looking for Mr. Liew. He just disappeared with all the money," Bautista said.

Oscar Embido, assistant regional director and chief of the NBI-AOCD, said Tuason inquired about the nature of the complaints filed against her by at least five investors.

Four of the five investors filed their complaints yesterday. The fifth, a businessman in his 30s, lodged his charges last week.

"Ms Tuason asked for five days to file a counter-affidavit to refute whatever charges the complainants had filed against her," Embido said, adding that he expected her to personally appear at the NBI again on Friday morning.

"She has to come because she has to give (her statement) under oath," he said.

The NBI, meanwhile, has set up a public assistance center at a hotel to entice investors to come out in private and cooperate in the probe.

The center is in the Azure function room on the 8th floor of The Pearl Manila Hotel which is across from the NBI headquarters on Taft Avenue, Manila. Tel. Nos. are 400-0088, local 3010 and 3011, and 0927-484-5883.

GONZALES-TUASON

The center will receive complainants round-the-clock Monday to Friday, the NBI said.

"We wanted to provide a private space for investors who might want to but are hesitant to come out and speak up regarding their PIPC investments," said lawyer Ruel Lasala, head of the NBI National Capital Region.

Lasala was quick to add, however, that the creation of an assistance center in a hotel was not meant to give the investors special treatment.

"Most of them were mum about the issue so we thought of a friendly approach. This is our way of encouraging them to cooperate with us," he said. "Besides, they're complainants, not suspects."

Reynaldo Esmeralda, NBI deputy director for regional operations services, said the center's expenses will come from the bureau's intelligence fund.

At the Senate, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile wants the chamber to investigate PIPC in aid of legislation "to determine the machinations used by PIPC to perpetrate its scheme and circumvent the law."

In a resolution he filed yesterday, Enrile said PIPC had illegally engaged in foreign exchange trading even as it was registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission for the last nine years as a "research company."

Enrile said the Senate would look into the "alleged illegal investment syndicate involving the PIPC which has caused losses of millions of dollars in foreign exchange trade, with the end in view of recommending remedial measures to protect the investing public."

With a report from Dona Z. Pazzibugan

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Rescind P500-M incinerator loan, NGOs urge gov't

By TJ Burgonio

THREE NONGOVERNMENT organizations yesterday pressed the government to rescind a P500-million loan agreement with the Austrian government that financed incinerators in government hospitals.

The EcoWaste Coalition, Greenpeace and Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC) said the government continues to pay some $2 million, or P100 million, a year for the 1996 loan although the incinerators were substandard and were retired in 2003.

"This is a concrete example of an illegitimate loan. We don't pay for loans we didn't benefit from," FDC secretary general Milo Tanchuling said in a joint briefing yesterday.

The Department of Finance signed the loan agreement with the Bank of Austria in 1997 to finance the importation and operation of medical waste incinerators in government hospitals.

The incinerators, installed in 26 hospitals run by the Department of Health, failed to meet the emission levels guaranteed by the Austrian supplier, according to Greenpeace.

The facilities were all closed in 2003 when the incineration ban imposed under the Clean Air Act of 1999 took effect.

A test conducted by the DOH and the World Health Organization on one of the incinerators showed that its dioxin emission was "870 times" the limit set by the act, according to Greenpeace Southeast Asia campaigns director Von Hernandez.

In 2002, the government began paying $2 million or P100 million a year for the loan. Under the contract, it has to pay the amount yearly until 2014, according to FDC.

"This is subsidizing the destruction of the environment," said Hernandez.

Echoing Tanchuling, Hernandez also called for the cancellation of the contract, saying, "It is totally outrageous that we are paying for an obsolete and deadly technology. We are being cooked in our own juice."

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Your Doctor Knows Best

Norbert Lingling D. Uy, MD, FPCP, FPCC

Question:

My friend had a heart attack. He died a day after his admission to the hospital. Why?

Doctor says...

Continuation from last week's column...

Death from a heart attack can be due to several causes. During the early hours of a heart attack, electrical short circuit can be triggered and abnormal heart rhythms may result in ineffective heartbeats. Sudden death in patients with chest pain is usually due to this electrical instability. The prompt institution of cardio-respiratory resuscitation (CPR) by persons who have training in Basic Life Support has resulted in several lives saved. In hospital settings, the timely use of defibrillator that shocks the heart back into a normal rhythm prevented many deaths among patients continuously monitored in coronary care units.

During a heart attack, the heart muscle becomes dysfunctional. When the heart is unable to do an adequate job of pumping blood out into the circulation, congestion develops in the lungs and causes difficulty of breathing. Delay in treatment may result in more heart muscles being damaged. With more extensive heart muscle damaged, shock and eventual death will occur.

There are now drugs that can restore blood flow to the heart muscles and prevent their fatal injury. They can dissolve the clots and prevent further blockage of the coronary vessels. Together with other drugs that relieve the heart of its workload, injury of the heart muscles may be reversed or area of damage limited. In some instances, a more invasive procedure may be required to restore the blood flow.

Drugs to dissolve clots are best given within six hours of the onset of symptoms. The longer the delay in their administration, the less likely that benefits can be derived. This delay all too often happens when the patient hesitates to seek an emergency consult.

Precious minutes are wasted when victims or relatives fail to recognize the important signs and symptoms or when patients deny them. Others waste time looking for or trying to get in touch with their personal doctors. Still others would try some home remedies.

When someone is suspected of having a heart attack, do not delay, he should be brought immediately to the emergency room of a hospital. If things turn out to be a false alarm, the ER doctor can at least tell him the most probable cause of his chest discomfort. It is always best to consult your doctor if you are symptomatic.

Dr. Uy is an Associate Professor of Medicine at UERM College of Medicine. He is the Chief of the Section of Cardiology, UERM Hospital, Head of the Department of Medicine, Mary Johnston Hospital and a consultant at St. Luke's Medical Center and Philippine Heart Center.

This column is supported by AstraZeneca Philippines as part of its disease awareness campaign. This is not intended to replace the advice of a healthcare professional. Always consult your doctor.

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Judge shuts out Trillanes: It's 85M vs 11M

From page A1

favor of allowing Trillanes to attend Senate sessions.

Besides issuing a blanket denial of Trillanes' requests, the presiding judge of the Makati City Regional Trial Court Branch 148 even handed the newly elected senator what amounted to a rebuke.

In his 11-page order, Pimentel agreed with all the prosecution arguments that Trillanes' motions "partake of special privilege and preferential treatment."

Pimentel censured Trillanes for trying to apply "undue pressure" on the court by asking he be allowed the same liberties granted by other courts to former President Joseph Estrada and former Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao Gov. Nur Misuari.

The judge said:

"This court is an independent and impartial court. Accused Trillanes' frequent (and repetitive) invocation of the Misuari and Estrada cases is telling proof that to him, this court should just cavalierly imitate other court rulings based on newspaper accounts."

"In any case, his undue pressure on this court to parrot the other court rulings is misplaced because in the Estrada case, it is not even a regional trial court but a Sandiganbayan Special Division that ruled on the former's continued 'house arrest' pending the resolution of that case."

Jalosjos case

Referring to jailed former Rep. Romeo Jalosjos, the judge said that "juxtaposing the Jalosjos case and accused Trillanes' is not comparing 'apples with oranges,' as the idiom goes, for in fact they are the same banana."

Pimentel cited the Jalosjos case where, he said, the Supreme Court ruled that detention prisoners facing nonbailable offenses do not have license to a special furlough.

"He (Trillanes) is disappointed but he considers it a temporary setback. He believes we can still convince the judge to reconsider," the former Navy lieutenant's lawyer, Reynaldo Robles, told the INQUIRER.

Robles said he would file a motion for reconsideration, recalling how in the past the judge had also reversed decisions on appeal.

It was a total defeat for Trillanes, who is facing charges of coup d'etat for the failed 2003 Oakwood mutiny.

The judge not only denied his requests to attend Senate sessions, set up an office in his detention quarters and be allowed access to media. Pimentel also spurned his plea to receive members of his Senate staff in the Marine brig (detention facility).

Pimentel quoted the prosecution and agreed: "Accused is a nonbailable detention prisoner charged with a capital offense. He should not be furloughing from his place of detention at the Marine brig.

"But while the prosecution recognizes his status as a senator of the Republic, he should also acknowledge that his new status will not and should not affect the proceedings in this case."

Likewise, the judge echoed the prosecution's stand that while the commander of the Marine brig may not object to Trillanes' daily attendance at the Senate, "he (the officer) does not represent the people in this case."

"The DOJ as civilian authority supersedes the Marine brig," the judge said.

High security camp

The court also gave weight to Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon's appeal to deny Trillanes' request to be allowed to establish an office inside the brig on the ground that the AFP cannot allow a political office to be established inside a military detention facility in order to insulate the military and its members from "political partisanship."

The court said the brig was a high-security facility and not a civilian office "from which Senate staff and assistants can come and go, or hold office."

Pimentel also subscribed to the so-called Jalosjos doctrine to the effect that: "When the voters of his district elected the accused-appellant to Congress, they did so with full awareness of the limitation on his freedom of action."

"They did so with the knowledge that he could achieve only such legislative results which he could accomplish within the confines of prison. To give a more drastic illustration, if voters elected a person with full knowledge that he is suffering from a terminal illness, they do so knowing that at any time, he may no longer serve his full time in office," the judge said.

The doctrine further held that "Allowing accused-appellant to attend congressional sessions and committee meetings for five (5) days or more in a week will virtually make him a free man..." *With reports from Julie Aurelio, Dona Pazzibugan and Christine O. Avendaño*

Brownouts mar hearing four tin

By Jerome Aning

THE COURT OF APPEALS, WHICH is hearing the petition for habeas corpus filed by the mother of missing agriculturist-activist Jonas Burgos, was plunged into darkness four times, lasting 5 to 10 minutes each, because of power outages.

The justices, however, did not suspend the second day of the hearing, which ended with an argument over the license plates of the vehicles linked to the abduction of the son of press freedom icon Jose Burgos Jr.

Five days earlier, a fire hit the main building of the Court of Appeals, damaging the offices of at least nine associate justices.

"That's up to you to prove," Justice Enrico Lanzanas of the court's Eighth Division told Assistant Solicitor General Amparo Cabotaje-Tang when she raised the possibility that the license plate, TAB-194, on the maroon Toyota Revo used in the abduction of Burgos on April 28 might not be the same plate reported as having been stolen from the XL-TG (modified jeepney) impounded at the camp of the Philippine Army's 56st Infantry Battalion in Bulacan.

Speaking on the witness stand, Edita Burgos, Jonas' mother, said the fact that the military had custody of the jeepney at the time of her son's abduction meant sol-

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Batanes schools

From page A1

of the country which have better infrastructure.

Getting the Batanes public school system wired was one of the many milestones celebrated by Gilas, an acronym for Gearing-up Internet Literacy and Access for Students, a project of a group of private companies and the Department of Education launched in January 2005.

The program aims to provide Internet access for students and basic Internet literacy programs in 6,030 public high schools by the year 2010.

For every school, there are at least 10 computers that the students can use. According to Gilas computations, 10 computers can provide 400 hours of learning.

More than two years into the program, Gilas has connected 1,441 high schools to the Internet, including those in remote and mountainous municipalities of Batanes and Misamis Oriental. As of June 2007, all public secondary schools in 22 cities nationwide had been connected to the Internet.

Batanes is a small province located 280 kilometers off the northernmost tip of Luzon.

Putting it on the digital map was challenging since the country's remotest province doesn't even have telephone lines and enjoys only partial electricity in some municipalities, officials behind the project said. It took them a year-and-a-half to finish the Batanes project.

Good use of pork

Former Batanes Rep. Dina Abad, who used part of her pork barrel to roll out the project, said she and other officials had to get help from many technical people to hurdle certain technical and geographical obstacles.

Abad said the mountains made it hard for techn lish a "line of s Telecoms' wireles

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Abad also expl technicians had protect the equi islands' strong w weather, which c signals.

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Cyber ed

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Abad said she access in schools the Batanes stud literacy and prep lege.

She added that

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Witness tells how 4 men took away Joe Burgos son

From page A1

busily tending to about 50 customers when a man asked her if he and his companions could speak to one customer, whom she later identified as Jonas. The activist was wearing a gray or white shirt and blue jeans.

Seated alone

Jonas, who was seated alone at a table in the restaurant's extension, was surrounded by the four men.

From the counter where she was posted, Agasang said she could see that the four men were standing as they spoke to Jonas for about 20 minutes.

The supervisor said she even heard Burgos say, "Call the manager of this restaurant and I will tell them you will take me."

Agasang said she looked in Jonas' direction and saw that one man had something bulging on the right side of his waist.

Woman near Jonas' table

Agasang said she also noticed a woman seated alone at a table near Jonas who had been intently watching what was happening to the activist. The woman had a "worried expression," Agasang said.

Agasang said she approached the woman and asked her if she was with the four men and the woman said "yes." The woman later left with the four men, along with Jonas.

The supervisor recounted a moment when Jonas and the four men passed by her, and Jonas looked at her, saying, "Ma'am, *aktibista lang po ako*."

Asked by Assistant Solicitor General Amparo Cabotaje-Tang why she did not report the abduction to the mall's security personnel, Agasang said that she did not want to leave the restaurant unsupervised and that all her staff were busy tending to the customers.

She admitted that there was a phone in the kitchen but she did not use it. She said there was no guard around because the guards in the mall were often on roving status.

"I had no experience dealing with such an incident. It was the first time in my eight months as supervisor that it happened," Agasang said.

Nobody cared

She added: "There were many people around [during the incident], but nobody cared. Even the [officials] of the mall didn't care."

She later said that two hours after the abduction, the head of the mall's security office, accompanied by a guard, went to the restaurant and inquired about the incident. She said she gave them a verbal account of what happened.

She said she did not hear anything about the incident until May 1, when she was instructed by another guard to go to a police station and make an official statement.

Sketches of suspects

During her testimony, Agasang identified sketches of one of the four men and the woman she referred to in her affidavit. She also made a sketch of the restaurant, showing the positions of Jonas, the abductors, the woman and herself.

During her cross-examination of Agasang, Tang asked several questions about the identity of the woman seated at the table near Jonas.

Justice Enrico Lanzanas interposed: "What's the point in this line of questioning? Are you doubting the existence of the woman?"

Tang replied that she was merely testing Agasang's credibility.

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vertible proof" that the military was involved.

"It's possible that the plates on the Toyota were tampered [with]. I'm not saying that they were tampered with but it's up to the court to appreciate it," Tang told reporters.

Edita's lawyer, Ricardo Fernandez, however, said the burden of proof lay with the respondents because the presumption was there was only one set of license plates with the number TAB-194.

"The plate was in the custody of the 56th Infantry Battalion and it was on the vehicle to which Jonas was forcibly taken, therefore it was the military who abducted Jonas," he said.

When she testified, Edita also pointed out that Esperon's report to the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), which is conducting a parallel investigation of the case, had an attached dossier which said, among other things, that her son went by the aliases "Ramon" and "Raymond" and that the Burgoses were "landlords" even if they owned only 4 hectares of farm land in Barangay Tartaro, San Miguel, Bulacan.

She recalled the pronouncement of Army chief Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino that Jonas was a member of the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

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would facilitate communication and improve the classroom experience. With the Internet, students can do research, teachers can update their lessons and staff can easily send reports to regional and national offices.

In the future, Abad hopes teachers nationwide could meet in cyberspace, share lesson plans and discuss teaching methods.

Chat, Friendster

Mario Deriquito, director for the Ayala Foundation's Center for Social Development, said schools should encourage students to discover the Internet, while sticking to the DepEd's cyber education curriculum.

Gov. Oscar Moreno of Misamis Oriental, who recently had all the province's high schools connected to the Internet, said he did not mind students who chat and play games or surf social networking sites like Friendster as long as this was done in moderation.

Moreno said such activities would help students get comfortable with the technology and realize its potential.

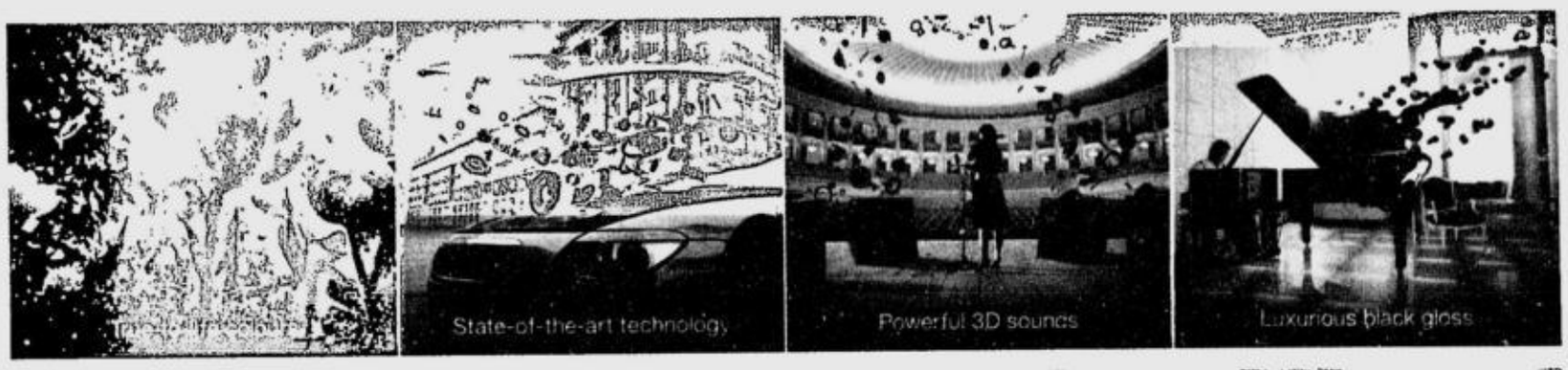
Natural techies

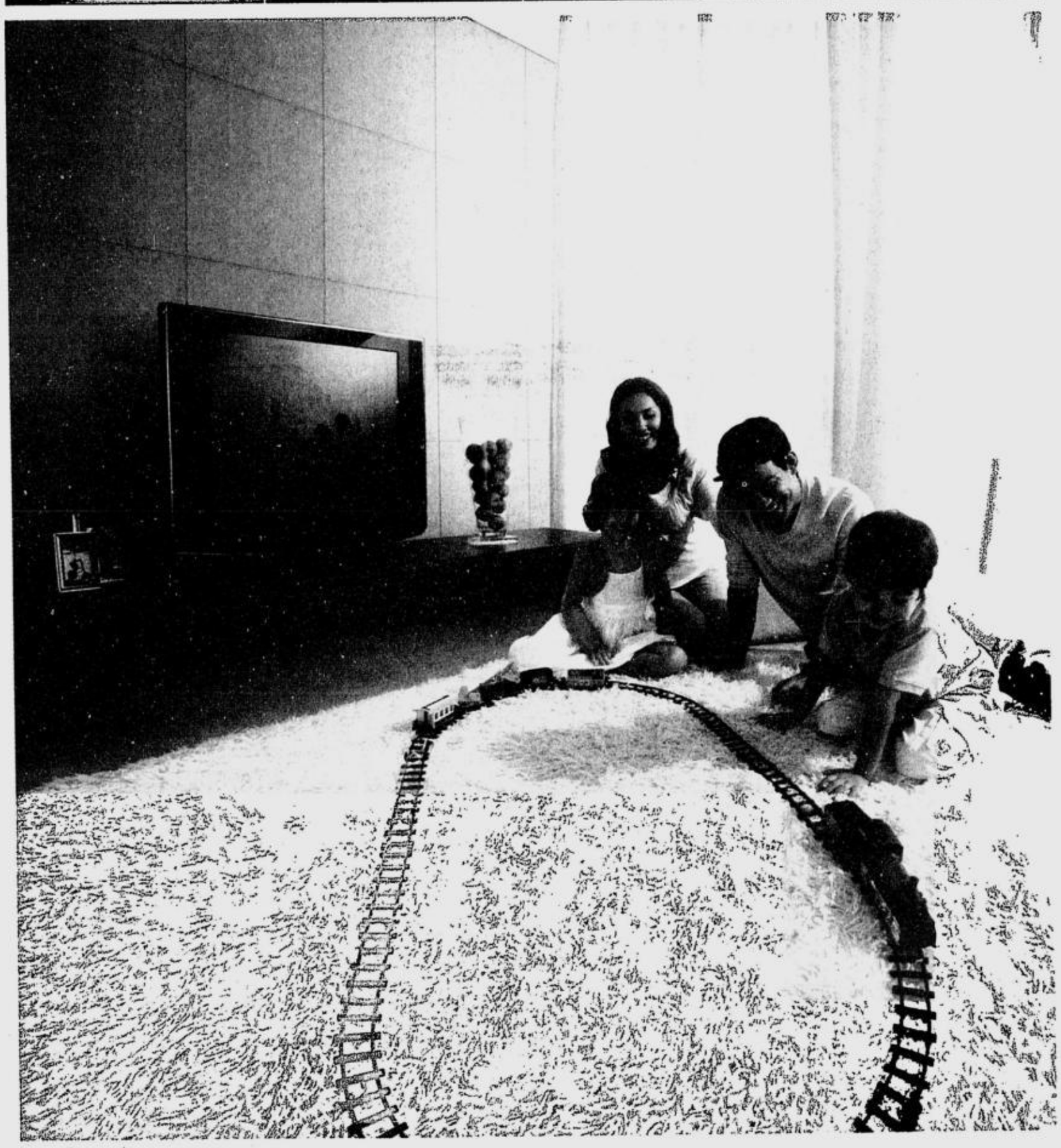
"Children, they are natural techies. They will play games, access Friendster ... They need to experiment because that is how they learn the computer," Moreno explained.

"It's liberating. It's empowering. Imagine, students from the mountains can now access the Internet," he added.

Like Batanes, Misamis Oriental was another challenge for Gilas as the schools there are located in mountain villages which have few good roads.

Misamis Oriental is the first province in Mindanao to be fully connected, giving its 59 public high schools the opportunity to access the world with a click of the mouse.





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'Weird weather'

EDITORIAL

METRO MANILA AND THE NEARBY PROVINCES and parts of the Visayas face the real prospect of a water and power shortage in the next two or three months unless the weather radically changes or cloud-seeding greatly increases the water supply.

The looming water shortage will have wide-ranging effects. Already the lack of rainfall has destroyed P215 million worth of corn in 19 of 34 towns in Isabela. A long dry spell will greatly affect agriculture, particularly the production of basic food supplies such as rice and other grains.

The dry spell will also affect the power sector. The state-owned National Transmission Corp. has placed all power distribution companies on "red alert," saying that power interruptions could occur anytime. Rolling brownouts, in turn, will disrupt industrial and business operations and dampen economic activity.

A long dry spell will also result in warmer air temperature, bush fires as well as urban fires, health problems and the proliferation of red tide, further reducing the supply of safe food from the sea.

Scientists and weather experts have said that the dry spell and the "weird weather" in Metro Manila and nearby provinces are the result of climate change—the increase in global temperatures due to greenhouse gases, like carbon dioxide, that trap heat from the sun. But we wonder why the scientists and weather experts did not raise the alarm earlier so that remedial measures could have been taken sooner. Did they not see the signs as early as May, when the dry spell began to hit Metro Manila, or were they too preoccupied with the elections to notice?

One thing that has increased the dependence on water for energy generation is the lack of coal to power the coal-fed plants of independent power producers. Why was this coal shortage not noticed earlier so that it could have been remedied sooner?

At this point, nothing much can be done but to take remedial measures. While there are still clouds, cloud seeding would have to be intensified. Dikes and dams have to be repaired. More temporary water-impounding projects or shallow tube wells will have to be built quickly. And deep wells will have to be rehabilitated and water harvesting facilities built.

In the agricultural sector, the efficiency of irrigation systems will have to be improved, resistant crops that require less water will have to be planted and a modified crop calendar will have to be adopted.

In the long term, a total logging ban may have to be enforced to stop the destruction of trees and the collapse of watersheds that retain rain water. A system may have to be devised to harvest and impound rainwater collected from the rooftops of houses and buildings. A lot of rainwater literally goes down the drain during the rainy season, and if this could be harvested and stored for future use, it could relieve somewhat the worsening water crisis.

Everyone has to pitch in and help alleviate the water shortage. This means optimum use has to be made of the available water. For instance, water used in washing clothes could be collected and used to flush toilets, to wash cars and sidewalks.

A water crisis is often an occasion for making jokes in our light-hearted society, like the advice to "take your scotch straight, instead of with water." But really, we have to heed the usual conservation tips: Take shorter showers. Check for pipe and faucet leaks. Install a toilet displacement device such as a bottle to reduce the amount of water used for flushing. Don't let the water run while shaving, washing your face or brushing your teeth, etc. These may be little, ordinary measures but the water savings could add up to a substantial amount.

We look at water as an ordinary, everyday thing and it is only during shortages and crises that we are reminded of its importance to our lives. Water is life. There is the so-called "Rule of 3s": one can survive without oxygen for about three minutes, without water for three days and without food for three weeks. These are not iron-clad rules but on the average it works out that way.

Household water is not an inexhaustible resource. When we use water wisely and conserve it, we are helping to ensure the smooth functioning of communities and the continuity of life not just in our country but on our planet.

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Triple transitions

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

A STUDY THAT TRACKED OVER THE LAST 24 years 3,327 mothers with 3,080 children in 17 Cebu barangays is providing data for international scientists now grappling with the "nutrition transition": overfed adults, borne in wombs of ill-nourished mothers, show greater vulnerability to chronic diseases.

"Cebu has undergone major changes since the Longitudinal Health and Nutrition Survey started two decades ago," North Carolina University's Linda Adair told a Philippine Population Association Conference. "Overweight and obesity in adult Filipino women increased dramatically in 18 years."

Fat and sugar have surged in diets of Cebuano youngsters as urbanization increased, she said. Among young adolescents, there's marked susceptibility to chronic diseases, like hypertension, type-2 diabetes and heart disease.

There's also a "double burden of malnutrition," University of the Philippines professor Corazon Barba told the conference. Dietary changes between 1978 and 2003 reveal that in 29 out of every 100 homes undernourished kids live with overweight adults.

Iodine deficiency has been licked by a successful government salt-iodization program. Stunting and underweight incidence decreased. But the data track a worrisome surge in "overweight-to-height" incidence among children up to 10 years of age, Barba noted. "And undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies persist among children and other vulnerable groups."

Are later-day vulnerabilities traceable not merely to early life undernutrition but even further back—in the womb? Scientists now grapple with "developmental origins of health and diseases," Adair explained. "Some call it the 'DOHad theory.' Risk seems higher for those who are ill-nourished even as fetuses, when followed by excess nutrition in later life."

The "nutrition transition" follows two earlier passages. After World War II, "demographic transitions" occurred first in advanced countries like Japan and Britain. It came later in nations like Ireland and Malaysia. Death rates dropped as the numbers of birth dwindled. The "new equilibrium" resulted in smaller populations.

"This demographic transition (may) result in the end of human population growth before the end of the 21st century," notes State of the World 2007. "Stabilization of population has not been imposed by disease, famine or war."

Isn't that overoptimistic? Look at the Philippines and Thailand which were "development twins" in the early 1970s. Thailand cranked up its demographic transition then and today's population stands at 64 million. The Philippines dawdled, and our population now exceeds 85 million. In Africa, ravages of HIV/AIDS imposed a gruesome disequilibrium where, in some countries, deaths outstrip births.

The second is the "epidemiological transition." Others dub it the "double burden of disease." That's where "primitive"—and preventable—illnesses stemming from penury, like TB and diarrhea, interlock with "modern" ailments: coronary disease, high blood pressure, etc. These illnesses no longer follow in sequence, as Western countries experienced earlier, notes World Health Organization. Today, they interlock.

The third transition in nutrition needed to be tested in human communities studied from birth to adulthood. But where? Such long-term analyses are rare as hen's teeth, specially in poorer countries.

And that's where Cebu's longitudinal study entered. Data gathered in 1985 were buttressed by five follow-up surveys. In 1992, there were 2,264 8-year-olds out of the original 3,080 babies who were restudied. And 1,885 of them were interviewed as 21-year-olds in 2005. "Except for one who migrated to Iceland, and others who've moved, we've kept track of two-thirds," Adair said.

Credit for enabling Cebu to produce one of the world's few longitudinal studies goes to two scientists: then Mayor (now Nutrition Foundation of the Philippines director) Florentino Solon and Fr. Wilhelm Flieger, SVD of San Carlos University. Until his death in 1999, Father Flieger was the foremost authority on Philippine birth and mortality studies. Solon won the 2005 International Nutrition Award from the UN University and University of Queensland. Among the collaborating agencies were USC's Office of Population Studies, Johns Hopkins University, the US National Institute of Health and the World Bank.

Today, the program forms part of a consortium of similar programs in Brazil, Guatemala, India and South Africa. This study put Cebu on "the cutting edge of international research," Adair observed.

Over the years, the Cebu study helped shape World Bank policy for early childhood development as well as world-scale immunization projects. Countries, from Russia to Egypt, studied and adapted its methodologies and conclusions. Major scientific journals from Harvard, Oxford and Chulalongkorn universities cite it.

But "no prophet is honored in his own country." The Cebu City Council still hasn't a clue on how CLHNS focused on crucial problems: from impact of early childhood development on school dropouts and attainment to child labor. And Mayor Tomas Osmeña preens over his "crown jewel": a debt-strapped 296-hectare reclamation project, peddled at fire-sale bargain prices for lack of investors.

This is blinkered ignorance of crucial transitions. Unfortunately, this is blindness to the truth that "life is the threshold at which all other hopes begin."

* * *

E-mail: juanlmercado@gmail.com

Light of learning

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

IN LINE WITH MAKING THE PHILIPPINES A First World country in 20 years, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has appointed Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, the country's chief economist, as the head of the Commission on Higher Education. "We have too many unemployed college graduates," Neri told the INQUIRER. "We want to make sure the college graduates are matched with the requirements of the industry."

That isn't a promise, that is a threat.

To begin with, you know there's something wrong when GMA starts talking about 20-year visions. With other leaders, that is probably completely rhetorical, a way of telling people how one intends to chart a path or blaze a trail for others to follow long after one is gone. Fidel V. Ramos also spoke of "Philippines 2000" in his time, though his presidential term was to end in 1998 and was forbidden by the Constitution from seeking a second one. Ramos himself was tempted to take his vision of Philippines 2000 literally, hankering to be there past 1998. He might have crossed the Rubicon, too, had not the Rubicon turned into a rampaging flood in the form of the 1997 Asian financial crisis.

I recall that in December 2000, a month before Erap fell to Edsa II, GMA invited media people to a lunch in a restaurant in Makati (an Italian one, if I recall right, and it was a modest affair). The future president exuded an air of humility in keeping with the fact that, unlike Cory Aquino, she had not led the fight against Erap, she had merely tagged along. Indeed, in keeping with the fact that she was beholden to Cory and Jaime Cardinal Sin for being in a position to step into Erap's shoes.

I found something curious in the presentation of GMA's vision then, which was a 10-year plan for the country. I asked lightheartedly in the open forum if by that she meant to stay for 10 years. Everyone laughed, including me. I am not laughing now.

You hear GMA talking today of 20-year visions, be very, very afraid.

What's wrong with the idea secondly is that this is proffering an Enchanted Kingdom in lieu of a Philippines 2000, and there is nothing enchanted about it. Become a First World country in 20 years? We'd be happy to still be a Third World country in that time. Yes, third. All our neighbors, including Cambodia, are now zooming past us.

Cielito Habito had an interesting talk at the INQUIRER last Wednesday night about the economic state of the nation. The good news, he said, is that there is growth, the stock markets are booming and inflation is down. The bad news is that the growth is externally driven, is not producing employment (it's happening in construction and mining rather than in agriculture and manufacturing; jobs in the latter group have in fact fallen), and direct foreign investments are disappearing and going to—most of all—lowly Cambodia. We're doing least among our own neighbors. The notion of becoming a First World country in 20 years gives whole new meanings to Ninoy's favorite song, "The Impossible Dream."

Last and most importantly, I don't know whether to laugh or cry that we have put higher education in the hands of an economist who sees its purpose as producing employable graduates. I grant education is also meant to give students skills to enable them to find work. That certainly is the dream of many, if not most, parents who scrimp and save to send their children to college. But that cannot be the dream of those who oversee education, let alone higher education. The purpose of education is not to provide jobs, it is to educate. The purpose of education is to make students think. The purpose of education is to make students dream. The purpose of education is to fill students, young and old, in or out of school, with imagination and ambition and drive they begin to think like the proverbial Chinoy who, when he meets another Chinoy some years after graduation, asks, "What business have you formed?" and not like the proverbial Pinoy who, when he meets a fellow Pinoy some years later, asks, "What job have you found?"

If the purpose of education were merely to enable the kids to find jobs, then higher education should be scrapped altogether. Indeed, colleges should be closed down except for those teaching vocational courses. Not including criminology since its graduates clearly do not learn how to stop crime, they only learn how to add to it. If the point were merely to match skills and jobs, the Department of Education should become a bureau of the Department of Labor and school lessons limited to teaching the kids to speak English, preferably with an American accent (or for those targeting the European market a British one) since all the jobs the graduates are likely to land are abroad or in call centers.

The crisis of Philippine education is not that graduates are not getting jobs, it is that students are not getting educated. Education is not just imparting skills, it is imparting values. Education is not just imparting knowledge, it is imparting civilization. Education is not just producing employable kids, or worse exportable ones, it is producing decent human beings, or better honest Filipinos.

No one drives this point home better than Theresa Pangilinan. She was the graduating student of Cavite State University who shouted "*Patalsikin si* Gloria!" and held up a banner saying, "No to Cha-Cha" while GMA was delivering the commencement address. At the time she interrupted the proceedings, GMA was talking about the importance of students mastering English so they could find jobs in the Cavite economic zone. Between the two, it was easy to see who grasped the concept of education better. She was the one who proclaimed to the world one of its most basic, or cardinal, tenets:

It's not the economy, stupid. It's the truth.

Right timing

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE TRANSFER BY PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo of the Philippine Mining Development Corp. (PMDC) from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to the Office of the President signals her serious intent to develop our mining industry as the lead engine of economic growth and development from hereon. It will mean greater focus on exploiting the full potentials of this industry, now one of the world's most gainful industries. This move is sensible, for as the Supreme Court ruling of December 2004, penned by INQUIRER columnist and retired Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban, which reversed its earlier ruling of January that year that declared the Mining Act of 1995 unconstitutional, put it, beneath our soil lies an incredible amount of mineral wealth that could greatly alleviate the poverty of our people—given responsible mining, of course.

Many nations have used their mineral wealth to transform poor and backward economies. A leading example in recent times is Chile, once poverty-stricken but now the most progressive economy in Latin America, owing to its mineral exports. There's also Australia, which has been expanding for the 17th straight year in part due to hefty mineral exports. In fact Perth, Western Australia's mining town, has been outstripping bigger cities like Melbourne and Sydney in growth. By contrast, our country is said to be the fifth richest in terms of mineral resources, but it's also among the world's poorer ones because of underdevelopment.

* * *

As newly appointed PMDC Chair Heherson Alvarez points out, we have 65 nonperforming mining sites whose permits were cancelled earlier, covering 65,000 hectares of mineral lands, plus some 25 mining sites in various stages of development—all ready to be offered to mining companies. The timing is right, for minerals such as coal, copper and nickel, which we have in large quantities, are enjoying high prices in the world market. Nickel, for instance, is an indispensable component for stainless steel which China is buying from all sources.

GMA has picked the right person for the job. As head of the Senate environment committee, Alvarez sponsored a big environmental summit in 1995 that drew various players, including the big mining players. He also made his mark in various international conferences such as the Kyoto and Berlin conferences. He authored various critical laws on the environment, including the Clean Air Act and the creation of the Natural Integrated Protected Areas System (Nipas).

But Alvarez should have few illusions about his new job. The fact is that it would be a tough balancing between the financial interests of mining companies, the protection of the environment, rendering justice to the indigenous peoples and calming the Church's fears of their exploitation. But going for him is the big mining interests' awareness that his agenda jibes with that of his boss. Then, too, the Church and indigenous folks are confident of his populist leanings, judging from his recommendation to GMA in 1992 to protect the small miners in the seething Diwalwal controversy. Ultimately, Alvarez will be effective only to the extent that she gives him full support.

* * *

During the six hours of deliberations on the speakership issue last July 23, opposition Rep. Didagen Dilangalen, perhaps unwittingly, helped Rep. Jose de Venecia when he sponsored the resolution questioning the legitimacy of tenure of House Secretary General Roberto Nazareno. In the voting, Nazareno was upheld by 160 majority coalition members and rejected by 46 in the minority, including 15 or so in Rep. Pablo Garcia's bloc. Dilangalen then called for another vote, which drew the same results. Thus, even that early, Garcia's supporters realized he could not muster anything near the needed 123 votes to win the speakership, so they didn't bother to nominate him. But two days later, Garcia denounced for four hours the election of JDV as a "sham procedure."

* * *

The world's climate has gone bonkers. In the middle of the rainy season, our dams have gone dry, threatening the power supply of Metro Manila, yet China and other parts of Asia are experiencing heavy floods. Across the world, Britain is supposed to be in the middle of summer, but some regions of England and Wales are experiencing floods for the first time since 1766, while Eastern Europe is experiencing a heat wave. We were lucky when we were in Britain. Before the first big rains struck, friends drove us to the university town of Oxford, Stratford-on-Avon (where Shakespeare was born 443 years ago), and the picturesque towns of Cotswold, a Unesco World Heritage site, and it was sunny throughout. Two days later, folks in Stratford had to be evacuated as the Avon swelled, while Oxford students rallied with placards in the floods, urging their government to do something about climate change.

* * *

We visited Edinburgh, Scotland's capital and an elegant city of castles and lofty church spires and the famed annual festival of music and arts. From there we hit the road in search of "the spirit of William Wallace," Scotland's great patriot and "uncrowned king," whom actor Mel Gibson brilliantly portrayed in "Brave Heart." Wallace and his army of peasants fought in the late 13th century the tyrannical conquest of English King Edward I, known as the "Hammer of the Scots," pushing down as far as York in England. But the Scottish nobles refused to support him (in fact they betrayed him), as they greedily fought among themselves for the right to rule Scotland. But Wallace's beheading in London angered Scottish noble Robert Bruce who rose up against the English Crown and led his people to victory in 1314. Scotland remained free until the early 18th century, when unification of the British Isles came about. To this day it remains quite independent in its culture and thinkdng and enjoys a great deal of political autonomy.

Distrito's winning game

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

YOU MAY STILL REMEMBER RUDY DISTRITO, the former PBA player who was sentenced some months ago for the killing of a Mexican migrant who was allegedly his wife's lover. I wrote about his case on the prodding of Ruffy Ignacio, a "faithful correspondent" who has alerted me many times to developments in both the Puget Sound area in Washington State, where he makes his home, and elsewhere in the United States, mostly involving the Filipino-American community.

Ruffy knew of Distrito's case, and worked to obtain for him the best possible legal advice and leniency from the judge, because Ruffy had been manager of the Country Fair Hotdogs team in the 1980s, for which Distrito played after Crispa, and before joining Barangay Ginebra.

Anyway, Distrito has been writing regularly to Ruffy from his prison in Nevada, and the letters, written in Filipino, are full not just of the former player's gratitude to friends who worked (and are working) on his behalf as well as the entire Filipino-American community, but also of "insider" stories about life in an American prison.

There's one letter, written last month, that was, unexpectedly, quite amusing and entertaining, given the circumstances the writer finds himself in. To give you as much of the "flavor" of the story as possible, I've taken the liberty of translating his letter into English, and editing only for conciseness and clarity. Here it is:

* * *

SIR, I have learned so much here in jail. The most important thing in my life now is the Lord. He is my guide who will give me another chance to go back to my family. Sir, even in my youth He has always been my guide and my companion as I attained fame. But I forgot Him for a while. Now, in everything I do, He is my guide in my decision-making.

I have so many stories to tell you from jail. Most of the basketball players here in America are black because they really dominate sports. Even here in jail, they think they're the only ones who know how to play basketball. Sir, they never asked me to join them because they said I don't know how to play the game because I'm Asian. Maybe they think I'm like them who know only the foolish things in life.

Basketball here in jail is played with ramen noodle soup at stake. My team was composed of five whites, three blacks and two Asians. The other team was all black, and all were so boastful because they think they're the only ones who know how to play. Anyway, Sir, I started playing only in the fourth quarter because my teammates were all tired. In other words, *bangko ako*. Our opponent's score was 45, ours 31. Sir, I showed all my hidden experience gained from 23 years of my life in basketball. Sir, we won and I was able to score 25 points in just the fourth quarter. We won by five points. The jail warden, who's white, was very pleased with our game. He declared that the other team has found its match and would no longer lord it over the jail.

So now, Sir, many teams here want to have me join them. I have so many more stories to tell…

* * *

MEANTIME, outside of prison, Ruffy and Abe King, another retired PBA player who has settled in the US, were busy putting up the PBA Legends USA Foundation. The first activity of the foundation was a benefit game to raise funds for Distrito's legal needs. Held last July 14 at the Renton High School Gym in Seattle, the game drew a number of retired players from around the US: Yoyoy Villamin, Peter Aguilar, Ponky Alolor, Marte Saldana, coach Rino Salazar, Elmer Lago, and a delegation of players led by Bernie Fabiosa who arrived late because of a delayed flight from Burbank.

In a report, King describes the game as "scintillating, fun and exciting." After the game, Fil-Am fans, many of them too young to have watched the players in their prime at the PBA, rushed to the teams for autographs, endless picture-taking and fellowship.

"Alolor's MVP trophy never left his hand till the next morning at the airport where he left for Frisco," writes King. "I think that is the last time Ponky will have (an MVP trophy), as next time around in Frisco, I will really hound him."

The foundation will be holding other benefit games in San Franciso, New Jersey, Chicago and other cities. "The athletes are gung-ho for finding new meaning in their basketball lives in America, and elevating their thrill for the game to greater heights," says King. "And as we envision, with funds we can raise through games and other ventures, we will embark on philanthropic projects in America and the Philippines."

The foundation, said King, would also like to thank PBA chair Ricky Vargas and commissioner Noli Eala and Viva Sports' Ronnie Nathanielsz for the $2,000 donation to the foundation. Distrito's family was on hand to receive the check and to receive the crowd's well wishes for Rudy.

* * *

IN A letter he wrote to thank Ruffy and King for putting up the foundation, Distrito shares that he is slowly shedding his anonymity in prison, thanks to the male nurses working in the prison, many of them Filipino. The nurses, he says, have spread word that he was a hotshot professional basketball player in the Philippines. "They call me 'Destroyer' because the male nurses said that was my nickname as a player, so now even the guards call me 'Destroyer'." The inmates, meanwhile, call him "O.G.," for "Old Gangster."

"I have so many personal stories to tell you," Distrito writes Ruffy. "There are so many amusing happenings here in prison. Here, you just have to be strong of heart and steadfast in life."

Doubtless, the support of his family and friends, especially the fans and the PBA old guards, helps him a lot in this regard.

What's not black and white but gray all over?

NEWSSTAND

John Nery

OPPOSITION SEN. LOREN LEGARDA'S NAME has been floated as a compromise choice for chair of the Blue Ribbon committee. That trial balloon is worth a closer look.

Legarda has spent time in the political wilderness; she knows what it means to be out of power. At the same time, she continues to enjoy wide popular support; she is only the second Filipino to top two nationwide Senate races, after the venerable Jovito Salonga (who went on to top a third).

Not least, she is invested in our political system; she has spent millions of pesos in her electoral protest against Vice President Noli de Castro. Given our politics of scandal, our culture of speculation, the simple expedient of putting our money where our mouth is—say, by filing a case in court, or pursuing a complaint even without the public spotlight—is an underrated civic virtue.

When I asked her for her reaction, however, she merely replied: "While I believe the Blue Ribbon should be chaired by an opposition senator, I have not expressed interest in chairing it. But I wish to be a member."

Even at the top, one must manage one's expectations.

* * *

One more anecdote from the Supreme Court-organized summit on political violence, before the details of that historic event slip into the treacherous mists of memory: By far the most bizarre presentation was by Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez. He gave a rambling talk, at one moment citing depressing statistics ("we lack 800 prosecutors nationwide"), at another taking a swipe at political enemies ("during the last budget, Senator [Frank] Drilon capped the Witness Protection [allocation]").

And then he concluded with an impassioned defense of … himself. "I fought for human rights, more than many of you here, I fought for human rights in the darkest days" of the dictatorship. "Nobody can tell me," he started, and then changed tack: "Nobody understands human rights better than I do."

Perhaps that explains why we had the summit in the first place.

* * *

After Sen. Manny Villar was elected Senate president last week, his rival for the position, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., introduced Senate Resolution No. 22 into the first day's agenda. The resolution, signed by 15 senators, "expressed the sense of the Senate"—its long title reads—"that Senator Antonio Trillanes IV be allowed to participate in the sessions and other functions of the Senate in accordance with the rule of law."

* * *

At first, it seemed no one would object. Earlier in the morning, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, sitting as presiding officer, had already assured Sen. Mar Roxas that Trillanes' absence from the senators' mass oath-taking did not disadvantage him, and Sen. Rodolfo Biazon that the detained ex-soldier did not lose any rights to the "resources under his command." (That phrase, you can say, is an ex-general's non-legal gobbledygook.)

But Enrile, and then Sen. Joker Arroyo, thought otherwise.

Speaking from the apparently still-bitter depths of personal experience ("I was once arrested," "I was never allowed to participate in the Senate"), Enrile asked Pimentel whether the resolution infringed on the boundaries of the courts: "Might not it be better if we respect the tripartite nature of our government?"

Arroyo, a human rights lawyer who helped defend Pimentel against martial law's excesses, also wondered about the effect the resolution would have on the country's courts. "The Senate must respect what is due the judiciary," he said.

The debate was shelved for the next day. On Tuesday, 11 senators stood up for the internal-

lation. On Wednesday, the Senate voted 17-4, in favor of the resolution. Only Senators Dick Gordon, Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Enrile and Arroyo voted against.

* * *

I cannot help but think that, even though the resolution was transparently well-intentioned, and filed by an ex-detainee himself, the dissenters got the issue right.

To be sure, the language of the resolution itself was based on a scrupulous regard for the prerogatives of the judiciary: a promise that Trillanes would be "present when needed by the court"; recognition that the "Regional Trial Court of Makati has primary jurisdiction over [his] person"; support for Trillanes' petition for bail.

And yet, the full effect of the resolution was to pit the entire Senate, itself naturally jealous of its own prerogatives, against a lone court. Instead of strengthening the fundamental principle of checks and balances, it may have undermined it.

The issue wasn't black and white; it was a shade of gray.

* * *

I used to fear for the soul of Fr. Ed Panlilio. I have always understood the charism of the priesthood as the art of the impossible, so how would the priest everyone calls "Among Ed" fare in the turbulent world of politics, where of course the principal discipline is the art of the possible?

I needn't have worried. Correspondents from the INQUIRER's Northern Luzon bureau held a roundtable with the new governor of Pampanga last Saturday, and I tagged along. I found a man with a sure sense of self, living proof of Max Weber's distinction between living "for" politics and living "off" it.

Panlilio was asked if he had any regrets, and he said he had none. He missed saying Mass, yes, but it was a sacrifice worth making. "I went into politics *because* I love my priesthood," he said.

More, next week.

* * *

Email: inery@inquirer.com.ph

Choices

YOUNG BLOOD

Cheryl Marie P. Andam

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

THERE ARE SO MANY THINGS I HAVE TO DO AND SO little time to finish everything. Goodness, now I realize that 24 hours will never be enough for me.

My adviser/boss wants me to finish all the reading materials he gave me. But how can I study all of these in just a few weeks before classes start? If I could tear all the pages of my books and stash them in my brain cells, I would definitely do it. I feel drained, and I am having difficulty comprehending all the genetics and molecular biology concepts since it's not really my forte. I didn't know before that these were necessary for my studies.

My work at the lab is truly horrible. I have to eat a really quick lunch and get back to what I'm doing—and that's at 3 p.m. or even later!

The fact that this is what I really want to study, and this is where I want to finish my degree makes me want to cry, perhaps because I don't have a choice. I cannot blame myself precisely because these were my own choices.

Indeed, we have to live with the consequences of our actions and decisions, no matter how difficult they may seem. Nobody forced me to do this—this has been my dream for so long.

What's sad is that I don't even feel any tinge of homesickness since I arrived. I simply have no time to feel that way. Pathetic, isn't it?

Each step toward that dream requires a massive amount of effort—and tears. I know that there are mountains and seas that I need to cross, and there is not even the assurance that I will find that pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Nonetheless, I have to go through this rather than face the shame of quitting in the middle of the battle.

Have you ever felt truly burdened by your choices? When your mind says "go" while your body is too weary to go on? When you want to cry out for help, but there's no one but yourself in the middle of a faceless crowd? You're dying from thirst and the oasis is many miles away, and you don't know if you'll choose to give up when you no longer have the energy to continue. When your soul pushes you to reach for that goal, but the only thing that you can say is, "How?"

Indeed, the path to excellence is never smooth. There are thorns along the way and stranglers that will choke your desire to move on.

But why do we want to do this? Is it because we want to prove something to somebody—to ourselves perhaps? Or do we want to earn a little respect so that our ego would blow up? Is this a matter of survival in this surreal world, a world we didn't chose to be born to? If we decide to stop and just drift with the flow, will the turbulence of life melt all our worries and frustrations away?

But how can we stifle the urge to be a better person by getting higher education? We made these choices precisely because we want to be looked up to. But I wonder: Once I attain that ambition, will the world stop to congratulate me? Probably not, because I am just another nameless individual in this overpopulated planet.

Why did I choose to do this? I am all alone, with no one to lift my spirit up, no one to push me forward and no one to dry my tears. Why did my kindergarten teacher never tell me that life is more than ABC and 1-2-3? Instead of teaching me my alphabet and nursery rhymes, she should have prepared me to be more strong when I left the four corners of the classroom. But why should I blame her?

Life is never easy. Whoever says it is must be insane. I know that I am still a rational being, even though I feel that I might go crazy anytime soon. But I suppose that's what life is—completely absurd and ridiculous.

Cheryl Marie P. Andam, 27, is a research assistant at the State University of New York (Binghamton). She will start her graduate studies in Ecology and Evolution in August while working as a teaching assistant.

Special

Precious Ivy Lopez

THE MUSIC OF THE PIANO IS A MAGNET. WHENEVER I hear it, my feet lead me to where it is. I listen in awe and observe in amazement as the musician's fingers skate through the keys.

Playing the piano is something I want to do. I have dreamed of being in a recital and playing a fast-tempo piece, with my fingers flying. Though I have a toy keyboard at home and have memorized the notes of a few songs, these are kiddie songs. I learned how to play them through the song book of my keyboard. Whenever I play, I only use my right fingers. I have difficulty controlling my left.

Although I learned to read notes in school, I don't know how to play a piece with a single sharp continuously. I might be able to play the piece, but very slowly. Once when I played a piece in the key of G (single sharp), I ended up fuming because of the 6/8 time signature and its many flags.

I have a hard time discerning the correct keys to press whenever I meet chords like Am7, B7 or the like. Though my music teacher said it is the first finger that should adjust whenever a "7" appears, I haven't got the hang of it. The piece he gave me to practice was "so basic that the guitar group of the school could play it with their eyes closed," but I haven't played half of it correctly yet.

When I hear my church mate Jude playing a lively tune, I wish I were in his shoes. I observe intently as he slows down his playing so that I might get the notes right, but it's all in vain.

I asked Jonima, another friend, to teach me how to play "A Prayer" (not Andrea Boccelli's). She did, but I was able to memorize only a bit of it.

In the dorm where I stay, there are two excellent pianists. Every time they play, I watch and listen in wonder. And I ask myself, "Why am I not as skilled as they are?"

But I suppose I cannot have everything I want. If I had every skill—playing all instruments, writing songs, playing all sorts of games, or doing math—I won't have to depend on someone else. I'd live and let others live, without a care about what's going on around me. But there are things others can do that I can't. I need their help, and so I have to establish a fellowship with them.

Whenever I commend a friend for her brilliant piano playing, she smiles and says, "Huh? And you're mentally sharp. You can crack up compositions in a short period of time, and doing that takes me days. Can you lend me your brain?"

Whenever she says this, I smile, look up and say, "Lord, it's OK that I'm not skilled with the piano. The musician is asking me to teach her to write!"

When somebody asks me that, she is telling me indirectly that she has confidence in me and that I should appreciate my gift because it makes me special in my own way.

Precious Ivy Lopez, 16, is a first year BA Language and Literature student at the University of the Philippines in Baguio City.

Don't touch coco levy funds

IN HER LAST STATE OF THE NAtion Address, President Macapagal-Arroyo enumerated a long list of projects that, clearly, would demand a huge budget. Unfortunately, to finance those projects, the administration plans to realign funds intended for the rural poor.

Finance Secretary Margarito B. Teves pointed to the sale of government shares in San Miguel Corp. as one of the possible sources of funds for the "Sona" projects.

Surely, Secretary Teves is aware that the SMC shares were bought using coconut levy funds. In its May 11, 2007 final ruling, the Sandiganbayan awarded these SMC shares to the government "in trust for all coconut farmers." Has the good secretary also forgotten that the Supreme Court had declared the coconut levy funds as special funds to be used solely for the development of the coconut industry and for the upliftment of the lives of coconut farmers and farm workers?

The uproar over the diversion of fertilizer funds and the human rights money has not fully subsided, yet here comes the administration again planning to divert resources. It is increasingly becoming apparent that this administration has acquired the bad habit of diverting funds meant for the rural poor.

We were expecting the Arroyo administration to finally introduce major reforms to correct social inequity in the countryside. Alas, there was no mention of social reforms in the President's Sona. Poverty alleviation was declared as one of the priorities in the Arroyo administration's remaining years, yet, ironically its plan of diverting funds intended for the poor runs counter to this noble aim.

The government's insistence on allocating the SMC shares for purposes other than what they are meant for goes against the interest of small and impoverished coconut farmers and farm workers. Using these special funds to bridge the budget deficit and finance the projects identified by the President in her Sona will deprive the coconut farmers of much-needed financial aid.

If anything, the proposed realignment of the special fund is yet again another manifestation of government's gross insensitivity to the plight of the poor coconut farmers and farm workers. The Arroyo administration has no business lining up big projects if it plans to dip its hands into the pockets of the poor.

Has Secretary Teves run out of ideas to source funds for government projects?

—OMI C. ROYANDOYAN,
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

SOLDIERS carry a wounded comrade after an encounter with communist rebels INQUIRER PHOTO

Why is the CPP-NPA ignoring gov't's call for a ceasefire?

FOR THE SAKE OF BELIEFS AND ideologies, so many lives have been sacrificed; thousands upon thousands of families have been dislocated and destroyed; millions of pesos worth of property has been damaged—in countless clashes between government forces and rebel groups. Filipinos against Filipinos. Ideology versus duty. When will this blight ever end?

The military proposed a three-year ceasefire with the communist rebels, simultaneous with the revival of the peace talks. Malacañang supported the proposal, so did the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines.

So, why did the Communist Party of the Philippines, the National Democratic Front and the New People's Army reject the proposal?

For a long time, we have been earnestly hoping for a long-lasting peace—the kind that will usher in progress and development. As peace-loving citizens, we are all duty-bound to preserve peace and democracy in our country.

Please give peace a chance. This is a call to all Filipinos. Sound this call everywhere, to all your friends, until it reaches our brothers and sisters in the CPP-NDF-NPA combine and affiliate organizations.

—RIC VALENZUELA,
valenzuela_rhic@yahoo.com

Oppose La Mesa Dam housing project

THIS IS A REACTION TO THE EDitorial titled "Poisoned water." (INQUIRER, 7/27/07) I'm relatively new here in the National Capital Region. I used to live in Malate, Manila; then I moved to Mandaluyong then finally, to Cainta.

Since I came here, I have never drunk tap water for fear of ending up in a hospital. It was not like this when I was living in Davao, my birthplace. Over there, I could drink water direct from the faucet and without worrying about being afflicted by any water-borne disease.

Back in the province when I was still young, my friends and I would just scoop water from the rivers to quench our thirst without fear of getting sick. I long for non-bottled water. I wish we can bring back the days when drinking water didn't have to be processed and was cheap.

The controversy involving a housing project inside the La Mesa Dam watershed can be likened to the controversy triggered by plantations encroaching on the watershed in Mt. Apo, the primary source of drinking water for Davao City and nearby provinces and cities. There was fear that pesticides and chemicals used in the plantations could contaminate the water source. Opposition to the plantations prevailed.

I agree that every Filipino here in the country has the right to a home. And I also agree that the La Mesa Dam watershed is not the only site available as a housing project for MWSS employees.

Let's preserve our precious water. Let's keep up with our opposition to the housing project in the La Mesa Dam watershed lest we end up someday with no water to drink.

—JOSE EMMANUEL PIOC,
antidoteonline@yahoo.com

Kudos to SM for 'great project'

PLEASE EXTEND MY THANKS and praise to the SM management for a great project—educating their staff, and eventually the public, on how to better understand persons with disabilities. ("'Barrier-free' environment at the malls for PWDs," INQUIRER, 7/22/07)

I have an autistic son, and I read about the incident which happened at Megamall four years ago. That incident really upset me, so much so that I disseminated copies of the incident report to friends and associates worldwide.

After reading the above-cited article, I was elated and sent the same to my friends and associates worldwide.

An Asian Autism Conference will be held in Hong Kong, with speakers from the United States. I have been privileged to be of help in the preparations for this event. I would sure like to have more feedback from SM about its project, and I will make sure that delegates and speakers of that gathering, which include the president of the Autism Society of America, Lee Grossman, will hear about such undertaking.

Thanks to SM for its initiative. We learn from our mistakes.

—BERNARD CHUA,
j3oConcepts@yahoo.com

Proper attire for Catholics who are going to Mass

THIS IS IN REACTION TO RINA Jimenez-David's July 6 column titled "More on 'improper wear.'"

It is about time that the Church issued guidelines in dressing for the faithful to observe when they are attending Holy Mass. Dress codes are required even in some restaurants: coat and tie for men; and formal dresses for women. Why should we not be properly dressed when we go to a place of worship to show reverence to the King of kings, Lord of lords, Boss of all bosses?

Modesty in dressing should be observed at all times. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and we should clothe ourselves properly to please Him Who created us in His image and Who sustains our very existence. Adoration, love and gratitude for Him can be shown in refined dressing, in reserving our best clothes for Sunday worship.

We attend the Holy Mass to adore God, thank Him for our blessings, say sorry to Him for our sins and ask for petitions. Clad in revealing clothes, can one honestly fulfill these goals in the Holy Mass? She distracts others and may amuse herself with her bold outfit.

Recently, I attended a Holy Mass for a wedding and I was appalled to see women inside the Church shamelessly attired in backless dresses, bare shoulders, plunging necklines, spaghetti straps and with slits up to the waistline, all for public consumption, in wanton disregard of the House of God. Shawls discreetly worn around the shoulders, chalecos and modest coverings would have lent respect to the solemnity of the Mass.

May we, then, call on fashion designers to please consider this suggestion in their creations: Women who, as the occasion requires, dress decently by "covering their bodies and opening their minds," and not the other way around, are more lovable, elegant and worthy of respect in the eyes of men. Treasured ladies keep their private parts as such and not flaunt them in public, especially in sacred places.

—CHING D. AUNARIO,
chingauna@yahoo.com

Clean, decent attire should do

THE ISSUE SHOULD HAVE BEEN the appropriate clothing for a solemn gathering like a Mass, and not a formal attire for a Mass.

"If I am a poor citizen who cannot afford a formal clothing, will you ban me from entering a place of worship?

Proper clothing should be clean and decent attire appropriate to the occasion.

—A. LEGARDO,
Concord, Ontario, Canada,
artoleg@rogers.com

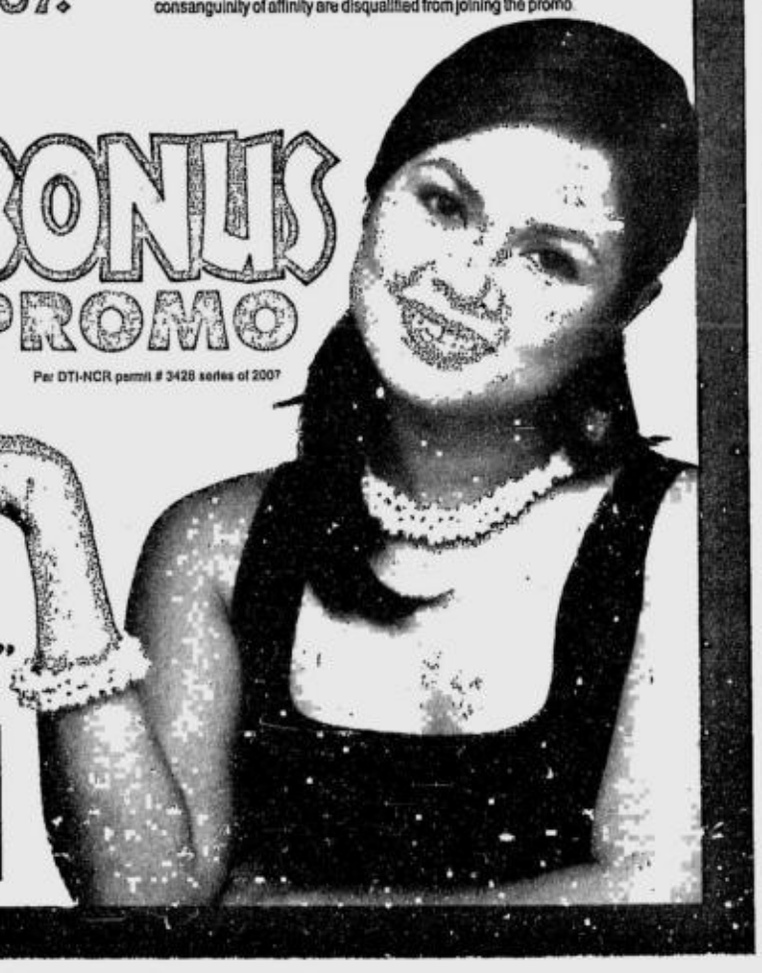
WITH OVER
P1 MILLION
WORTH OF CASH PRIZES
WILL BE GIVEN AWAY!

4 LUCKY WINNERS
OF P20,000.00 EACH
WILL BE DRAWN
EVERY WEEK

PROMO STARTS ON
JULY 22 UNTIL
OCTOBER 27, 2007.

MECHANICS:
1. Only cash loan transactions qualify for this promo.
2. For every loan transaction, participant earns one (1) computer generated raffle entry.
3. Transactions from 12:01 AM of July 22, 2007 until October 27, 2007 qualify for the draws.
4. Weekly winners will be drawn every Monday covering transactions from Sunday 12:01 AM until Saturday 12:00 MN of the previous week. Draws will be held at M. Lhuillier Cebu office witnessed by a DTI representative at 4:00 PM.
5. There will be one (1) winner each from Luzon, NCR, Visayas and Mindanao weekly.
6. Winner gets P20,000.00 cash tax-free.
7. Winners will be notified by phone call and by registered mail. Names of winners will be published in newspapers of general circulation within two (2) weeks after the last draw.
8. A winner wins only once during the entire duration of the promo. Non-winning entries for the week no longer qualify for the succeeding weekly draws.
9. Winners must personally present the following documents to claim the cash prize at any M. Lhuillier branch within 60 days from receipt of notification:
   A. Photocopy of a valid ID;
   B. Registered mail;
   C. and any of the following:
      a) The winning M. Lhuillier pawnticket bearing the winning number drawn (if the pawned item is not yet redeemed).
      b) The Official Receipt issued in exchange of the surrendered pawnticket (if the pawned item has already been redeemed). Official Receipt must bear the corresponding pawn ticket number of the redeemed item.
10. The submitted documents are subject for verification.
11. Prizes will be sent via ML Kwarta Padala after verification within two (2) weeks after submission of requirements for claiming of prizes.
12. Prizes not claimed 60 days from receipt of notification will be forfeited in favor of M. Lhuillier Philippines with prior approval of DTI. All prizes are tax-free.
13. All employees of M. Lhuillier Philippines and their relatives up to 2nd degree of consanguinity of affinity are disqualified from joining the promo.

M LHUILLIER
WEEKLY BONUS
RAFFLE PROMO
Per DTI-NCR permit # 3428 series of 2007



"Ang Tulay ng Pilipino"
M LHUILLIER
NUMERO UNO NG BAYAN
QUICK CASH LOANS

Gov't paying lip service to supporting art and music

THE PIANO TEACHERS GUILD OF THE Philippines correctly observed that in this age of computer gaming, online chatting and cell phone text messaging, Bach, Mozart and Beethoven are almost non-existent in Filipino families, record bars and radio/TV stations.

The absence is made more tragic because for the first time in almost two decades, the National Music Competitions for Young Artists (NAMCYA) of the CCP has been cancelled for lack of funds. Hundreds of young talented students, ages 6-19, and their families who have welcomed Bach, Mozart and Beethoven into their homes—and who have spent months upon months of arduous practice—are surely disappointed at this turn of events.

Yes, art and music may not be a national priority—and I fully agree that there are just so many important issues to address first; but should art and music be allowed to deteriorate to this extent, with only lip service from the government as support? Look at the grave deterioration of the facilities of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, the Folk Arts Theatre and the Philippine High School for the Arts, to name some. My disappointment is made graver because my young son was so focused and keen on the NAMCYA.

I thank Ceres Doyo for her articles on Helen Quach.

—EMIL SENTENA,
edanen@operamail.com

Pass-on charge on power supply from sister IPPs

THIS IS IN REACTION TO ELPI CUNA'S LETTER "Meralco is one with consumers." (INQUIRER, 7/16/07)

It is generally true that the generation charge is merely a pass-on charge, meaning not a single centavo of it goes to distribution utilities (DUs) like Meralco. But Cuna should explain the implication of Meralco's 9 percent equity and Philippine First Holding Corp.'s 51 percent equity (both Lopez-controlled companies) in First Gas Power Corp. which manages Sta. Rita and San Lorenzo plants.

It is this cross-ownership between the Lopez-controlled Meralco and the Lopez-controlled First Gas that distorts the true meaning of these pass-on charges. Cross-ownership has allowed Meralco and PFHC to feast on the "take or pay" provision in their supply contracts with their own IPPs, by forcing consumers to pay for electricity they did not use.

This was aggravated further by the Meralco IPPs which posted rates higher than Napocor's—from March 2003 to December 2005 as per records of the Energy Regulatory Commission. In the first month alone of the implementation of Meralco's unbundled rates (March 2003), the generation charge passed on to consumers averaged P3.40/kWh, with the Meralco IPPs charging P4.21/kWh, while the ERC-approved rate for Napocor was only P2.46/kWh. Yet, DUs are obligated to source the cheapest power supply. Meralco's July 2006 generation charge was P5.21/kWh when Napocor's ERC-approved rate was only P4.93/kWh.

This went on until Meralco decided on its own to source almost 50 percent of its power demand from the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (WESM). But this raised new problems for consumers because even the power rate of the "non-IPP" WESM, which shot up to P10/kWh in February this year, is being passed on by Meralco to its captive customer.

Thanks to a Supreme Court decision (in August 2006) that nullified the automatic recovery of these charges, the ERC was compelled to conduct public hearings on rate adjustments, thus allowing consumers to come in as intervenors/opposers to these petitions.

However, with the amendment of Sec. 4 (e), Rule 3 of Epira's implementing rules and regulations, which effectively removed due process, we are back to the automatic recovery of power purchase adjustments (PPA). Thanks to Meralco pushing the automatic cost adjustments, our July generation charge is now up at P5.67/kWh from P4.42/kWh.

This issue boils down to rates that consumers pay through the restored automatic generation rate adjustment (Agra). So let the facts speak for themselves. From the time Meralco implemented its ERC-approved unbundled rates in March 2003, the power rates have been consistently moving up.

Cuna's response can hide the interests of the Lopez-controlled Meralco in the generation business, but he can't hide them forever from the general public.

—PETE L. ILAGAN,
president, National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms,
680 Quirino Ave., Tambo, Parañaque City

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@ inquirer.com.ph

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Baguio offers water recycling lessons

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—FOLKS here don't need lessons in water recycling every time drought dries up Metro Manila's faucets because there's always a blow-by-blow instruction available from every household in the summer capital.

For the last 50 years, Baguio residents have been building water tanks that sometimes tower over their own homes to capture and conserve rain water.

In their houses are cabinets of recycled jars or a veranda of drums that are filled with tap water.

Many buildings here that date back to the 1960s have shower facilities or bathtubs, but none has been used for bathing.

BAGUIO covered by clouds. The city offers lessons on water recycling that it has been putting in practice for many years. RAZAS

Water storage

Bath tubs are particularly valuable commodities here because they are useful water storage facilities.

Maryanne, a 40-year-old housewife, said migrants and transient students, upon settling in, are often bewildered by households that wake up each day to collect bath water and laundry water in sealed receptacles.

The dirty water is later used to flush toilets, scrub floors or even to moisten yards.

"It doesn't matter how often we bath or wash dishes, but we make sure we save in another receptacle the water we used for the last bath rinse, so we can also water our house plants," Maryanne said.

The city's terrain helped shape this peculiar lifestyle, Teresita de Guzman, general manager of the Baguio Water District (BWD), said.

Baguio has the highest rainfall in the country, but much of this water often slide down the city's sloping hills towards low lying rivers that feed sections of Northern Luzon, she said.

Rain water

She said Baguio's water distribution cycle relies instead on rain water absorbed and processed by the city's natural aquifer.

The city also maintains a 10-hectare water reservoir on top of Mt. Sto. Tomas located between Baguio and Tuba, Benguet.

American engineers, who built the city from the ground up in 1909 for the colonial government, were aware about the [illegible] community's rain-drenched [illegible]ture, according to local histor[illegible]

They set up an elaborate d[illegible] system to feed the man-made lake [illegible] Burnham Park, knowing full we[illegible] how strong the rains get between July and October, they said.

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Maryanne said as long as the rations remain on schedule, no one is complaining.

Blame

Officials had blamed the shortage of water in Metro Manila on the denudation of the country's watersheds.

"This is all about trees and watersheds," said Sen. Loren Legarda in a press statement.

"We've been warning repeatedly about this in the past. The unabated destruction of trees has clearly diminished in a big way our natural ground capacity to hoard enough water," she said.

Legarda chaired the Senate committee on environment and natural resources and authored two major environment-protection laws in the 12th Congress—the Solid Waste Management Act and the Clean Air Act.

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Corbo, who is also an employee of the Sagay City government, said he shot Yngson in self-defense.

Yngson, however, disputed that, saying Corbo shot him from behind and without any provocation.

The police had recovered from Corbo a homemade shotgun with one live bullet and a casing for a shotgun bullet.

Various media organizations in Negros Occidental had issued a joint statement condemning the attempt to kill Yngson, stemming from what they believe was work-related motives.

"The attempts on Yngson's life is the worse violation of press freedom," the Negros Press Club, Negros Media Council for Press Freedom, Congress of Active Media Practitioners, NPC Council of Past Presidents and the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines-Negros Occidental chapter said in joint statement they issued yesterday.

Senior Supt. Rosendo Franco, provincial police director of Negros Occidental, said the case of Yngson is "good as solved," after the suspect confessed to committing the crime, although he claimed it was in self-defense.

Yngson, who is now confined at the Riverside Medical Center in Bacolod, said he saw Corbo reload his shotgun after firing at him, hitting him in the left arm, the back and chest. This prompted his companion to box Corbo, he added.

Corbo tested positive for gunpowder burns during a paraffin test at the PNP Crime Laboratory, police said.

Sagay police investigators said the shooting could be related to Yngson's exposè over the alleged selective method of arresting traffic violators by the LTO personnel.

DAR officials face contempt at SC over land dispute

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BACOLOD CITY—AGRARIAN Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman and eight others face contempt charges before the Supreme Court in relation to the installation of Task Force Mapalad (TFM) beneficiaries at a sugar farm in Negros Occidental.

The Supreme Court ordered Pangandaman and others to show cause why they should not be cited in contempt of court for installing TFM beneficiaries in Hacienda Velez Malaga in La Castellana, Negros Occidental despite a pending case.

Mario Diaz, lawyer of landowner Roberto Cuenca, said he received on July 13 a copy of the SC *en banc* resolution dated June 5.

The SC issued the order to Pangandaman, Agrarian Reform Undersecretary Narciso Nieto, Agrarian Reform Undersecretary Jeffrey Galan, DAR regional director Alexis Arsenal, DAR provincial agrarian reform officer Stephen Leonidas, PNP regional director Supt. Reynaldo Rafal, 11th Infantry Battalion commander Col. Jess Manangquil, 6th Regional Mobile Group commander Senior Supt. Pedro Merced, and La Castellana police chief Senior Insp. Regidor Alvarado.

Diaz said Cuenca's camp had urged the DAR to wait for the resolution of a pending case involving Hacienda Velez Malaga but their appeal to hold off the installation of TFM beneficiaries fell on deaf ears.

FARMERS trying to occupy land awarded to them through the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program lie wounded after they were shot as they moved into the farms that they had laid claim to.

The Supreme Court, taking cognizance of their motion for contempt, affirms Cuenca's position for DAR to wait for the court's final decision before taking any action in Hacienda Velez Malaga, Diaz added.

However, Pangandaman said that DAR is not a party to the case [illegible] before the Supreme Court as it was the TFM that went to the SC to question the Court of Appeals ruling on Velez Malaga.

But Diaz said that while TFM intervened in the case and filed a petition for certiorari before the Supreme Court, DAR remained the main party in the case.

Cuenca filed a complaint before the La Carlota Regional Trial Court against DAR after it cancelled Cuenca's title of ownership and issued a certificate of land ownership award (CLOA) in the names of the members of TFM, Diaz said.

In his complaint filed against DAR, Cuenca sought to annul the land reform coverage of Hacienda Velez Malaga on the ground that it was beyond the four-year-period prescribed by the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law, Diaz said.

The La Carlota court cancelled the CLOA issued for Velez-Malaga in 2002 because it violated the writ of preliminary injunction issued earlier by the RTC, he added.

DAR questioned the order before the CA but the CA sustained the RTC decision, Diaz said.

"In effect, the writ of preliminary injunction on DAR's action in Velez Malaga still exists," he said.

Pangandaman, however, said there were no grounds to charge them in contempt before the SC when they installed the beneficiaries.

He said the SC had previously ruled that the courts have no jurisdiction over agrarian reform cases. Hence, he said, the cancellation of the CLOA for Velez Malaga would not be valid.

Consumers threaten to take co-op

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

APALIT, PAMPANGA—THE FIRM that got a contract to rehabilitate the Pampanga Electric Cooperative 3 agreed to negotiate for an exit in the deal after five mayors and leaders of a consumers' group warned of a takeover on Monday through a protest rally by some 2,000 people.

About 30 policemen kept watch around the Pelco 3 office in Barangay San Vicente here.

But Victor Batongbakal, president of Asiaphil Management Resources Inc. (AMRI), was not bound to give his company an easy exit.

Toward the end of the first part of the dialogue, he asked: "What's in it for me if we part ways?"

"I don't want to do anything anymore with Pelco 3," he said.

Fr. Larry Sarmiento, spokesperson of the Kilusan Laban sa Investors Management (KLIM), said the mayors of Minalin, Apalit, Masantol, Sto. Tomas and San Simon, and leaders of Pelco 3 consumers did not offer a counter proposal.

Angel Cruz, a consumer-leader, moved for the creation of a transition team.

Sarmiento echoed the position of the mayors, saying an immediate takeover would put the Pelco 3 back to health.

The AMRI took over in April when Pelco 3's arrears with the National Power Corp. reached nearly P300 million and its system losses posted almost 30 percent. The cooperative was second on Napocor's delinquent list.

These problems resulted in the regular threat of power disconnection for some 70,000 households and businesses serviced by Pelco 3.

The protesters said the contract to manage and operate the cooperative was defective from the start because it was not consulted with the consumers.

They said the current board of directors had "no mandate" to enter into a contract because no general assembly had been held since 1999 to elect the directors.

This was biggest protest held since the cooperative was founded in 1981.

Felix Dimatulac, Pelco 3 president, said the board approved the contract after the Department of Energy and the National Electrification Administration endorsed it.

The consumers questioned the contract and asked a local court to nullify it.

Batongbakal said his company will leave if Pelco 3 pays the P25 million that the AMRI has initially invested and the P58 million it has spent to build a 65-kilovolt substation in Macabebe.

"I don't want to leave my sub station," he said.

Cops clueless over case of missing seminarian

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—The Cavite police [illegible] still clueless over the sudden disappearance of a seminarian who was reported missing since Monday, an official said Friday.

CADIVIN

Senior Supt. Fidel Posadas, Cavite police director, said they have launched "a deeper investigation" of the circumstances behind the disappearance of Eliseo "Ely" Cadivin, 34, a second year theology student at the Divine Word Seminary in Tagaytay City.

Posadas, however, said police doubt earlier reports which said the seminarian could have been abducted because of the money he withdrew from a money transfer office shortly before he went missing.

"I don't think somebody seized him because of the money he had at the time he disappeared. He didn't have much with him," Posadas said in a mobile phone conversation.

He said he has ordered the Tagaytay police office to do everything to immediately locate the missing seminarian.

According to his fellow seminarians, Cadivin was dropped off by the seminary's driver at the Western Union branch in Olivarez Plaza along the Silang-Tagaytay Road at around 1 p.m.

After getting his money, Cadivin sent a text message to his brother to tell him that he already received the money.

Those who have any information on Cadivin's whereabouts may contact Father Meng at 09179952275 and 046-4131253. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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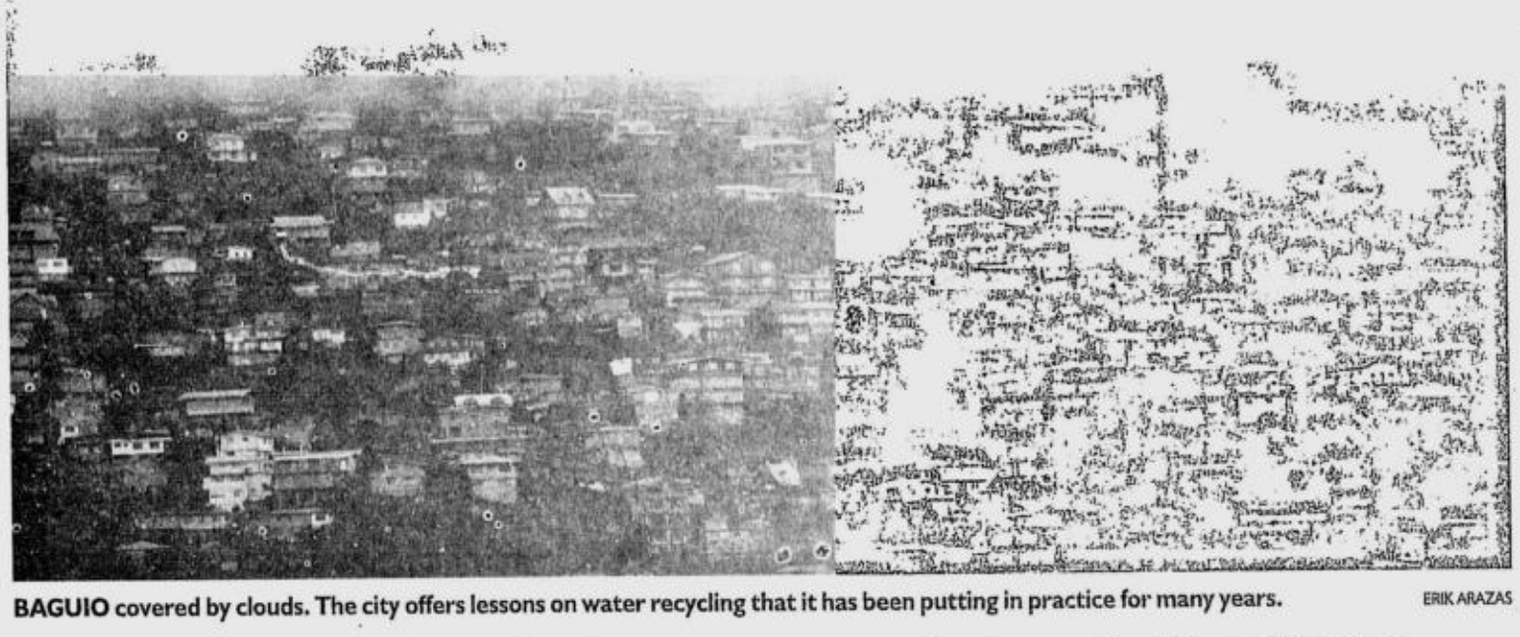

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Weather observer Efren Dalipog said the Baguio weather office measured 11 millimeters of rain that fell here on Sunday (July 29).

The BWD said the rains so far have filled up only 5 meters of the 50-meter high reservoir.

However, residents are not panicking yet.

Baguio water has always been rationed during summers because it is often this water basin that supplies most of the city's water during these periods, De Guzman said.

Perhaps the best indication of how successful Baguio recycling has been is BWD's sales figures.

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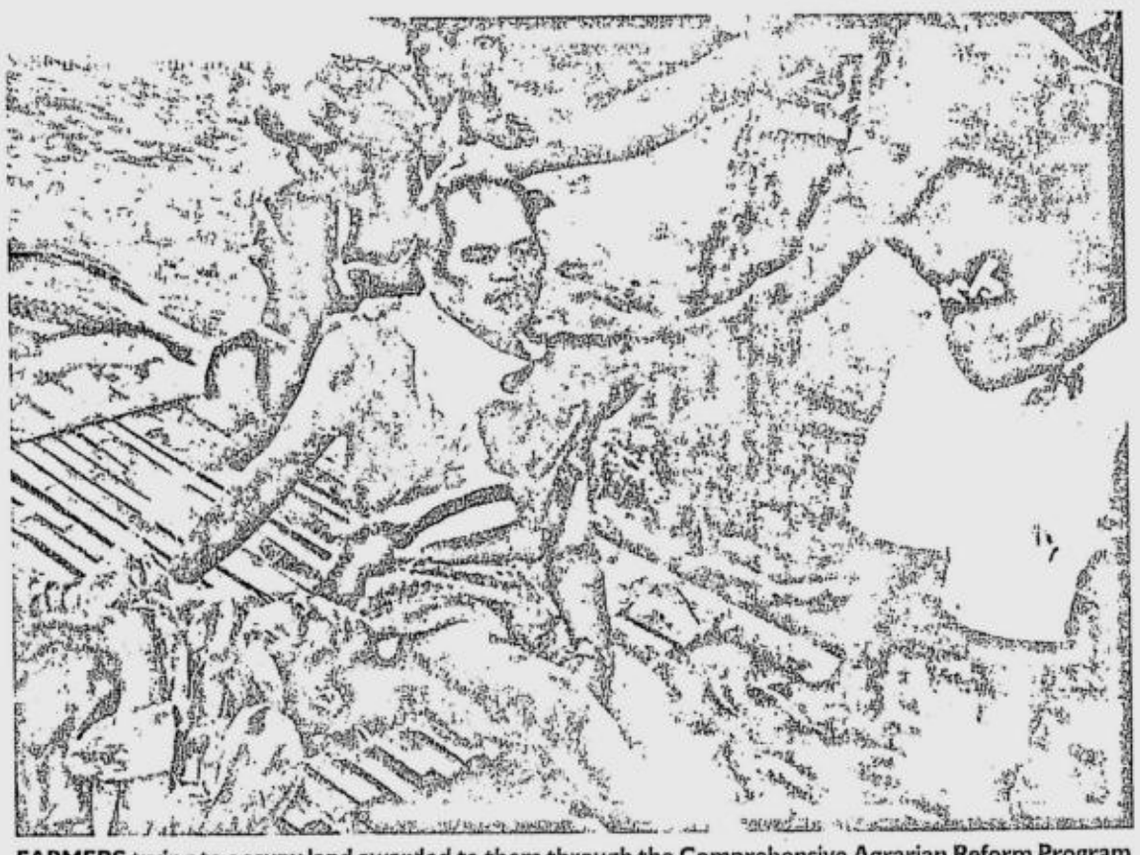
Mario Diaz, lawyer of landowner Roberto Cuenca, said he received on July 13 a copy of the SC *en banc* resolution dated June 5.

The SC issued the order to Pangandaman, Agrarian Reform Undersecretary Narciso Nieto, Agrarian Reform Undersecretary Jeffrey Galan, DAR regional director Alexis Arsenal, DAR provincial agrarian reform officer Stephen Leonidas, PNP regional director Supt. Reynaldo Rafal, 11th Infantry Battalion commander Col. Jess Manangquil, 6th Regional Mobile Group commander Senior Supt. Pedro Merced, and La Castellana police chief Senior Insp. Regidor Alvarado.

Diaz said Cuenca's camp had urged the DAR to wait for the resolution of a pending case involving Hacienda Velez Malaga but their appeal to hold off the installation of TFM beneficiaries fell on deaf ears.



FARMERS trying to occupy land awarded to them through the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program lie wounded after they were shot as they moved into the farms that they had laid claim to. JIMMY DOMINGO/CONTRIBUTOR

The Supreme Court, taking cognizance of their motion for contempt, affirms Cuenca's position for DAR to wait for the court's final decision before taking any action in Hacienda Velez Malaga, Diaz added.

However, Pangandaman said that DAR is not a party to the case pending before the Supreme Court as it was the TFM that went to the SC to question the Court of Appeals ruling on Velez Malaga.

But Diaz said that while TFM intervened in the case and filed a petition for certiorari before the Supreme Court, DAR remained the main party in the case.

Cuenca filed a complaint before the La Carlota Regional Trial Court against DAR after it cancelled Cuenca's title of ownership and issued a certificate of land ownership award (CLOA) in the names of the members of TFM, Diaz said.

In his complaint filed against DAR, Cuenca sought to annul the land reform coverage of Hacienda Velez Malaga on the ground that it was beyond the four-year-period prescribed by the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law, Diaz said.

The La Carlota court cancelled the CLOA issued for Velez-Malaga in 2002 because it violated the writ of preliminary injunction issued earlier by the RTC, he added.

DAR questioned the order before the CA but the CA sustained the RTC decision, Diaz said.

"In effect, the writ of preliminary injunction on DAR's action in Velez Malaga still exists," he said.

Pangandaman, however, said there were no grounds to charge them in contempt before the SC when they installed the beneficiaries.

He said the SC had previously ruled that the courts have no jurisdiction over agrarian reform cases. Hence, he said, the cancellation of the CLOA for Velez Malaga would not be valid.

Consumers threaten to take co-op

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

APALIT, PAMPANGA—THE FIRM that got a contract to rehabilitate the Pampanga Electric Cooperative 3 agreed to negotiate for an exit in the deal after five mayors and leaders of a consumers' group warned of a takeover on Monday through a protest rally by some 2,000 people.

About 30 policemen kept watch around the Pelco 3 office in Barangay San Vicente here.

But Victor Batongbakal, president of Asiaphil Management Resources Inc. (AMRI), was not bound to give his company an easy exit.

Toward the end of the first part of the dialogue, he asked: "What's in it for me if we part ways?"

"I don't want to do anything anymore with Pelco 3," he said.

Fr. Larry Sarmiento, spokesperson of the Kilusan Laban sa Investors Management (KLIM), said the mayors of Minalin, Apalit, Masantol, Sto. Tomas and San Simon, and leaders of Pelco 3 consumers did not offer a counter proposal.

Angel Cruz, a consumer-leader, moved for the creation of a transition team.

Sarmiento echoed the position of the mayors, saying an immediate takeover would put the Pelco 3 back to health.

The AMRI took over in April when Pelco 3's arrears with the National Power Corp. reached nearly P300 million and its system losses posted almost 30 percent. The cooperative was second on Napocor's delinquent list.

These problems resulted in the regular threat of power disconnection for some 70,000 households and businesses serviced by Pelco 3.

The protesters said the contract to manage and operate the cooperative was defective from the start because it was not consulted with the consumers.

They said the current board of directors had "no mandate" to enter into a contract because no general assembly had been held since 1999 to elect the directors.

"This was biggest protest held since the cooperative was founded in 1981.

Felix Dimatulac, Pelco 3 president, said the board approved the contract after the Department of Energy and the National Electrification Administration endorsed it.

The consumers questioned the contract and asked a local court to nullify it.

Batongbakal said his company will leave if Pelco 3 pays the P25 million that the AMRI has initially invested and the P58 million it has spent to build a 65-kilovolt substation in Macabebe.

"I don't want to leave my substation," he said.

Cops clueless over case of missing seminarian

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—The Cavite police are still clueless over the sudden disappearance of a seminarian who was reported missing since Monday, an official said Friday.

CADIVIN

Senior Supt. Fidel Posadas, Cavite police director, said they have launched "a deeper investigation" of the circumstances behind the disappearance of Eliseo "Ely" Cadivin, 34, a second year theology student at the Divine Word Seminary in Tagaytay City.

Posadas, however, said police doubt earlier reports which said the seminarian could have been abducted because of the money he withdrew from a money transfer office shortly before he went missing.

"I don't think somebody seized him because of the money he had at the time he disappeared. He didn't have much with him," Posadas said in a mobile phone conversation.

He said he has ordered the Tagaytay police office to do everything to immediately locate the missing seminarian.

According to his fellow seminarians, Cadivin was dropped off by the seminary's driver at the Western Union branch in Olivarez Plaza along the Silang-Tagaytay Road at around 1 p.m.

After getting his money, Cadivin sent a text message to his brother to tell him that he already received the money.

Those who have any information on Cadivin's whereabouts may contact Father Meng at 09179952275 and 046-4131253. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
ASIA PACIFIC EXPRESS CORPORATION 25/F Ahtel 2000 Corp. Ctr., 121 Valero St., Salcedo Vill., Makati City	Eungap Chang	President and CEO
MANDO WINIA CONSTRUCTION CORP. 1 Col. Martinez St., cor. West Ave., Quezon City	Shin Sook Kang (w/o PARK)	Finance Manager
MANDO WINIA CONSTRUCTION CORP. 1 Col. Martinez St. cor., West Ave., Quezon City	Chang Bae Park	President
OCEANLINK MARKETING CORPORATION 267 A. Lacson St., Sampaloc, Manila	Tikam Kishinchand Chellani	Marketing Manager
OCEANLINK MARKETING CORPORATION 267 A. Lacson St., Sampaloc, Manila	Kumar Munnalal Tulsiyani	Technical Manager
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL FOR CULINARY ARTS AND HOTEL MANAGEMENT INC. 4/F FBR Bldg., Katipunan Ave., Quezon City	Frederic Scailteur	Pastry Chef
DE LA SALLE UNIVERSITY INCORPORATED 2401 Taft Ave., Manila	Zelinna Cynthia Pablo	Faculty Member
A JU GLOBAL TRANSPORT CORP. 1016 Sunrise St., Concorde Village, Tambo, Parañaque City	Keun Mo Park	Finance Manager
EDU INFORMATION CENTER "AUSTRALIA" CORP. 501 5/F Executive Bldg., Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City	Tae Ho Kim	Consultant for Marketing
SUZUYO & CO., LTD. Queensway Ave. cor. Sta. Agueda St., Sto. Nino, Parañaque City	Tsutomu Hirao	Chief Representative
TOP AMUSEMENT TECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION 22/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Yen-Tzu Pai	Computer Programmer # 1 Sub Division Chief
TOP AMUSEMENT TECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION 22/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Chang-Hsing Li	Risk Management Specialist
TOP AMUSEMENT TECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION 22/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Ming-Wen Lee	Computer Programmer Specialist
AZTERIZK CONSULTANTS INC. 19 A Gumamela St., Clinicville, BF Homes, Parañaque City	Kyoungjong Yoo	Customer Support Staff
AZTERIZK CONSULTANTS INC. 19 A Gumamela St., Clinicville, BF Homes, Parañaque City	Jun Ho Yoon	Asst. Business Development Manager
AZTERIZK CONSULTANTS INC. 19 A Gumamela St., Clinicville, BF Homes, Parañaque City	Myungchull Kim	Customer Support Staff
YUE LAI SEAFOOD & HOT POT RESTAURANT 1668 A. Mabini St., Malate, Manila	Kwok Wai Law	Chef
TOUCHSTAR PRODUCTS, INC. 9/F Strata 2000 Bldg., Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Raymond Edward Stover	Chief Operating Officer
J & V INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT, INC. Penthouse D, LPL Plaza, No. 124 Leviste St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Choo Teck Lau	Managing Director
HK INVESTMENTO GROUP, INC. 8001 Financial Center Area, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City	Wai Man Lun	Chairman
NEW_BRIDGE LANGUAGE CENTER CORPORATION 2/F LM Bldg., 106 E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave., Libis, Quezon City	Jeong Hyun Youn	Administrator
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If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

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(PDI – July 31, 2007)

NPA says Negros mayor dead man walking; mayor says 'I'll oblige you'

By Carla p. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—THE COMMUNIST PARTY of the Philippines-New People's Army on Negros Island has declared Pulupandan Mayor Magdaleno Peña as its primary target for liquidation.

"Peña thinks he cannot be touched by the reactionary courts, police, and civilian bureaucracy despite his widespread oppression of the rights of the people but the NPA will go after him for his blood debts to the people," said Frank Fernandez, a former priest who now heads the CPP-NPA in Negros.

Fernandez's statement was sent to media outlets here Saturday via a tape-recorded message.

Among others, the CPP-NPA accused Peña of "unparalleled cruelty" in Pulupandan.

Peña, through his supporters, had caused the incarceration of almost 200 residents of the town over an election-related grave threat case. The cases have since been dropped. Peña had also threatened to evict thousands of town residents from land owned by his family.

Taunt

Peña, reached for comment yesterday, was unfazed and even taunted Fernandez and the NPA.

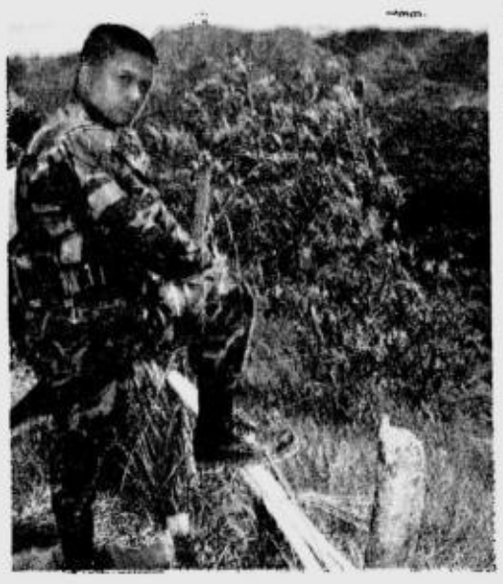
"Is he still alive, I thought he was dead?," Peña said, referring to Fernandez.

"If you are trying to pick a fight with me, I will have to oblige you ... show time continues," Peña said in his answer to Fernandez.

The NPA had claimed responsibility for the May 30 ambush on Peña's convoy in Pulupandan that caused him minor injuries but killed two of his companions.

"The NPA will continue and will not stop until revolutionary justice will be served on Atty. Magdaleno Peña. If not now, there is always a next time," the NPA had said earlier.

Fernandez also called on sugar planters and local officials not to heed the call of Peña to revive the Sugar Development Fund "where 5 percent of every picul of sugar produced will be used for the counterinsurgency operations of the Arroyo government."



A GOVERNMENT soldier guards a site of a cellular network tower that was bombed by New People's Army guerrillas in Iloilo City. The guerrillas had been demanding revolutionary taxes from a cellular phone company that has refused to give in, prompting the attacks on cell sites.
ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS

Fernandez said that if the landowners have more profits, they should use it to pay adequate wages and benefits to their farm workers.

Peña denied he had called for the revival of the SDF. "But that's a good idea, thank you for reminding the sugar industry," he said.

Added costs

Peña said if the NPA stopped extorting money, the planters would not have to pay for security measures and could give better wages to their workers.

Fernandez said Peña wants to return to the dark days of Operation Thunderbolt that was regretted by now retired Brig. Gen. Jarque as thousands of Negrenses were dislocated from their homes and many died of illnesses at the refugee centers.

Jarque, head of the Army in Negros in the 1980s, had waged Operation Thunderbolt against the rebel forces in southern Negros Occidental.

Jarque, however, went underground and joined the NPA in the late 1980s after he was mired in court cases and was put in a floating status because of the various charges filed against him by Peña.

> 'If you are trying to pick a fight with me, I will have to oblige you...'

Jarque earned the ire of Peña for serving a court order detrimental to Peña's interest in a family dispute over inheritance.

Peña later claimed that Jarque had caused the death of 450 children who became ill in refugee camps during Operation Thunderbolt yet the NPA, instead of punishing him, embraced him.

"Where you did not succeed in punishing Jarque, I succeeded in punishing him," Peña said.

Cruelty

Fernandez, however, said it was Peña who now allegedly wants to organize and arm thousands of paramilitary men who, in the past, caused widespread human rights violations against the people.

He also said Peña wants to replicate his "unparalleled cruelty" to the people in Pulupandan throughout Negros Occidental.

Peña, according to Fernandez, thought that by "using brutal force he can stop the legitimate demands of the people."

"He is wrong. The history of Negros shows that oppression triggers resistance. Suppression of workers ... results in armed revolution," Fernandez said.

Peña responded by saying that it was people like Fernandez who compelled the government to enact the Human Security Act.

"If people like Fernandez do not commit murder and mayhem, the government would not be forced to protect itself and the people," he said.

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NPAs kill 2 gov't soldiers, civilians

SORSOGON CITY—Two government troopers and two civilians were killed in an ambush by suspected New People's Army rebels in Juban town late Sunday evening, an Army official said Monday morning.

Lt. Rolly Basibas, spokesperson of the 2nd Infantry Battalion, said seven other soldiers were wounded in the ambush which occurred at 11 p.m at Sitio Palapay, Barangay Jagusara, Juban, Sorsogon.

He said the Army troopers were on their way back from combat in Magallanes town on board a civilian jeep when they were waylaid by the rebels.

The Army official said the two civilians were caught in the crossfire as they were on board a motorcycle and were tailing the vehicle carrying the government troopers.

Basibas identified the slain soldiers as Cpl. Ronald P. Aurellana and Pfc. Jerry H. Badaguas.

The civilians killed by enemy fire were identified as brothers Erwin and Remar Dioquiño.

Basibas said troops were still in the area to recover the slain soldiers. *Bobby Labalan, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

More Sports stories on A23 to A26

Late SPORTS

RP cagers bow to Jordan, bid Olympic dream adieu

By Francis T. J. Ochoa

TOKUSHIMA, JAPAN—AS IT WERE, ALL THE Philippines really had at most to cross the wide expanse between here and Beijing was a bridge made of straw.

And on Monday, even that was burned down, torched by a Jordan team that played its best basketball at the right time—depending on which side of the coliseum you were watching—on the way to an 84-76 victory over San Miguel-RP in the Fiba Asia men's championship at the Asty Tokushima here.

Jordan shredded the Philippines' Olympic hopes in twos, with resident stars Rasheim Wright and Zaid Alkhas doing the tango in the third period and Islam Abbaas and Sam Daghles completing the demolition job in the fourth.

The win booked for Jordan a quarterfinal slot in this Olympic-qualifying event.

"I think we played the best basketball in this championships," said Jordan's Brazilian coach Mario Palma, who harped on the fact that his team had to play through the so-called Group of Death and now has to open its quarterfinal bid right the very next day against South Korea.

For San Miguel-RP, a team culled from the biggest names in the PBA, the end to the dream of a cameo appearance at the 2008 Beijing Games came down hard, more so because of the fact that it produced its best start thus far in the tournament.

"We lost [in the second half]," said coach Chot Reyes. "We couldn't make a basket and they (the Jordanians) made theirs."

And the Jordanians made theirs in pairs.

Alkhas and Wright had eight points each in the third period as the two scored all but two of their team's total output there to allow Jordan to grab a 54-51 lead going into the fourth.

Abbas, who wasn't even supposed to play because of an ankle injury—and who at one point needed to be replaced to have the injury checked—then scored six straight points in the fourth and combined with Daghes in a 15-4 exchange that ripped the game wide open, 69-55, with 3:16 to play.

"The last four months, people have been talking about the Philippines and how they prepared hard for four months," Palma, a Brazilian, said. "But when they arrived here, I don't think they were in shape. In the second half, they looked tired."

Surprisingly, San Miguel-RP didn't go with the zone early in the second half when Wright started wresting control of the match.

Wright had shown an aversion to the zone in a loss againt Iran, a game that forced today's knockout match for the final quarterfinal berth for Group A.

Asked why he didn't go with the zone as the Iranians did, Reyes took a few seconds to ponder.

"I wanted [the players] to be more aggressive and falling back on the zone did not allow that," he said.

"We tried it in the fourth but then [when Jordan missed shots], we couldn't get the rebounds."

The Philippines dropped to the lower half of the quarterfinal bracket, where—at most—it will battle for ninth place.

"We worked long and hard only to be derailed by two bad breaks," said Reyes, who still rued "the technical foul that the Greek referee slapped on us" in a heart-breaking loss to Iran that virtually doomed the country's chances.

The other bad break, Reyes said, was the "misfortune of the draw."

At least, on that one he had an ally.

The volcanic Palma again failed to check his temper in the post-game press conference and blasted the Fiba for allowing the formation of the Group of Death and then making his team play the day after surviving the toughest draw.

The Philippines started out hot, racing to a 24-15 lead early in the first half. But it was also at that point that the team lost its grip of the game, forcing four defensive stops but failing to convert in any of the ensuing possessions that could have broken the Jordanians early.

"That's where we lost the ballgame," said Reyes.

"I take full responsibility for that. The boys played hard and I'm proud of the way they played."

The Philippines opens its campaign in the lower half of the quarterfinal bracket at 9 a.m. (local time) against Syria.

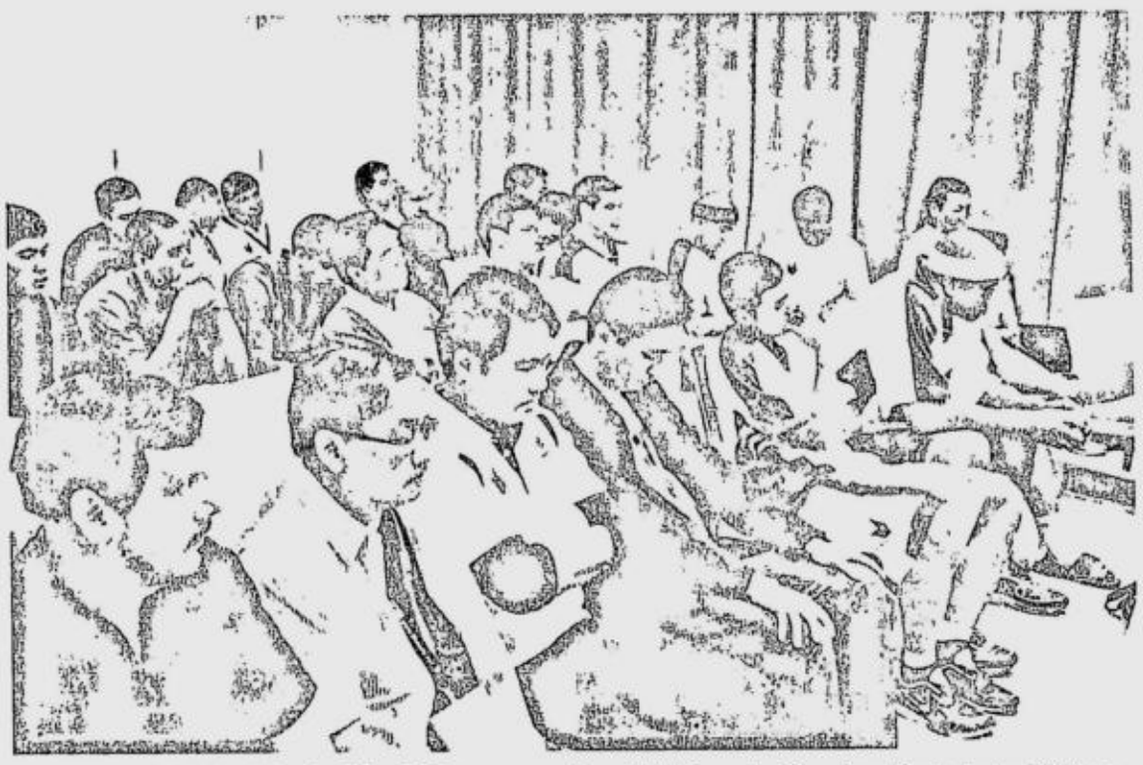
The scores:

JORDAN 84—Wright 24, Daghles 22, Alkhas 16, Abbaas 9, Soobzokov 6, Al-Sous 3, Idais 2, Z. Abbaas 2, Anajjar 0, Bashir 0.

SAN MIGUEL-RP 76—Taulava 14, Alapag 10, Caguioa 9, Williams 9, Hontiveros 9, Helterbrand 7, Raymundo 6, Williams 5, Ritualo 3, Menk 2, Seigle 2, Pennisi 0.

Quarters: 13-18, 33-35, 54-51, 84-76

Notes: Danny Seigle was a non-factor again for the second straight game, bothered by an injury that started out as cramps against Iran. Team officials noticed a bruise on his ankle and didn't use him against China. He played only four minutes against Jordan and scored just two points... The loss disappointed a lot of Filipino fans who came all the way here to watch the games. Many Filipinos had no tickets and relied on the generosity of the likes of SBP president Manny V. Pangilinan, Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentevella, SBP trustee Michel Lhuillier, businessman Arben Santos and many more, who purchsed tickets so they could watch



PLAYERS and officials of the San Miguel-RP team, as well as officials from the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas listen intently to the homily during a special Mass for the delegation in Tokushima, Japan. FRANCIS OCHOA

FIBA-Asia Men's Championship

STANDINGS	W	L
Group A		
Iran	3	0
Jordan	2	1
SMC-Philippines	1	2
China	0	3
Group B		
*Japan	2	0
Lebanon	2	1
UAE	1	2
*Kuwait	0	2
Group C		
Qatar	3	0
Kazakhstan	2	1
India	1	2
Indonesia	0	3
Group D		
South Korea	3	0
Taipei	2	1
Hong Kong	1	2
Syria	0	3

* still playing at press time

PRELIMINARY ROUND RESULTS

July 28, Saturday
Group A
Jordan d. China, 78-65
Iran d. SMC-RP, 75-69
Group B
Japan d. UAE, 109-66
Lebanon d. Kuwait, 104-59
Group C
Qatar d. India, 106-49
Kazakhstan d. Indonesia, 107-53
Group D
South Korea d. Hong Kong, 107-67
Taipei d. Syria, 90-66
July 29, Sunday
Group A
SMC-RP d. China, 79-74
Iran d. Jordan, 60-54
Group B
UAE d. Kuwait, 69-68
Japan d. Lebanon, 77-67
Group C
Kazakhstan d. India, 97-74
Qatar d. Indonesia, 86-45
Group D
Hong Kong d. Syria, 104-100
Taipei d. South Korea, 85-70
July 30, Monday
Group A
Iran d. China, 77-68
SMC-RP vs. Jordan*
Group B
Lebanon d. UAE, 106-64
Japan vs. Kuwait*
Group C
India d. Indonesia, 72-66
Qatar d. Kazakhstan, 76-69
Group D
Taipei d. Hong Kong, 98-81
South Korea d. Syria, 89-79

China dailies blast squad's poor form

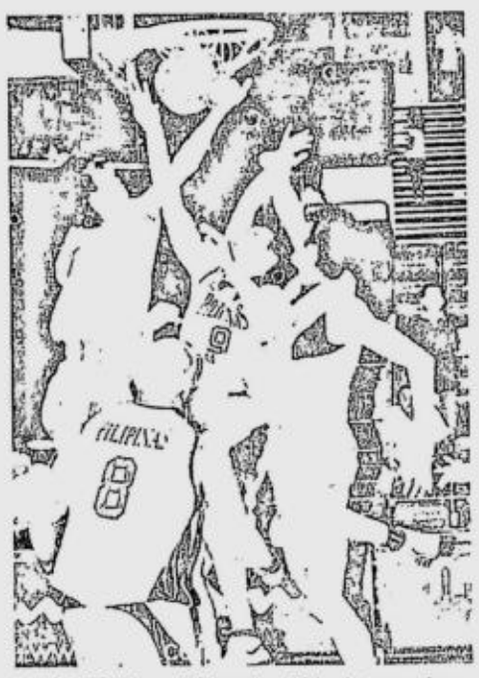
BEIJING—STATE media on Monday bemoaned the worst performance in decades by China's men's basketball team, which crashed out of the Asian championships in the first round.

The upset came as a blow to a country with high hopes for the men's team at next year's Beijing Olympics.

Even though China sent a second string team to defend their Asian title in Japan, Titan Sports and other newspapers pointed out that for the first time in 32 years, the 14-time champions failed to reach the event's knockout stages.

The team looked "dead from the neck up," said the Beijing Times, during the later stages of its match Sunday against the Philippines, which it had to win to stay in contention for a quarterfinal place. They lost 79-74.

The Chinese also lost to Jordan, 78-65, on Saturday and to Group A topnotcher Iran, 77-68, at the close of the group preliminary round.



KELLY Williams (9) battles China's towering frontline as Asi Taulava (8) gets ready to help.

China's chief coach A Dijiang agreed that the team went off the boil at a crucial stage of the defeat to the Philippines.

"Their minds went blank, forgetting everything they knew about tactics and technique," he told the Titan Sports newspaper.

But the coach said the result was only to be expected given the side's youth and inexperience.

Sixteen countries, divided into four groups, are competing in the championships. The tournament winner qualifies for a place in the Olympics next year.

As hosts of next year's Summer Games, China automatically gets a berth in the tournament and do not have to pre-qualify here.

China's A-team are playing in the Stankovic Cup, an international tournament in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou.

The team includes former NBA players Wang Zhizhi and Yi Jianlian. Houston Rockets star Yao Ming is out injured. *AFP*

Lebanon, Taiwan through

TOKUSHIMA, JAPAN—LEBANON AND TAIwan on Monday advanced to the second round of the Asian men's basketball championship, keeping their Olympic dreams alive for 2008.

Lebanon overwhelmed the United Arab Emirates, 106-64, with Fadi Elkhatib pouring in 37 points, Joseph Vogel scoring 14 and Omar Eiturk adding 13 to lead the team.

Lebanon finished second in the four-team Group B with a 2-1 win-loss record, ahead of the UAE and Kuwait.

In Group D, Taiwan routed Hong Kong, 98-81.

The two squads join South Korea, Japan, Kazakhstan, Qatar and Iran, which secured their places in the second round on Sunday.

In Group C, India gained its first win, beating Indonesia, 72-66, but it came too late as Qatar and Kazakhstan have already taken the top two places. *AFP*

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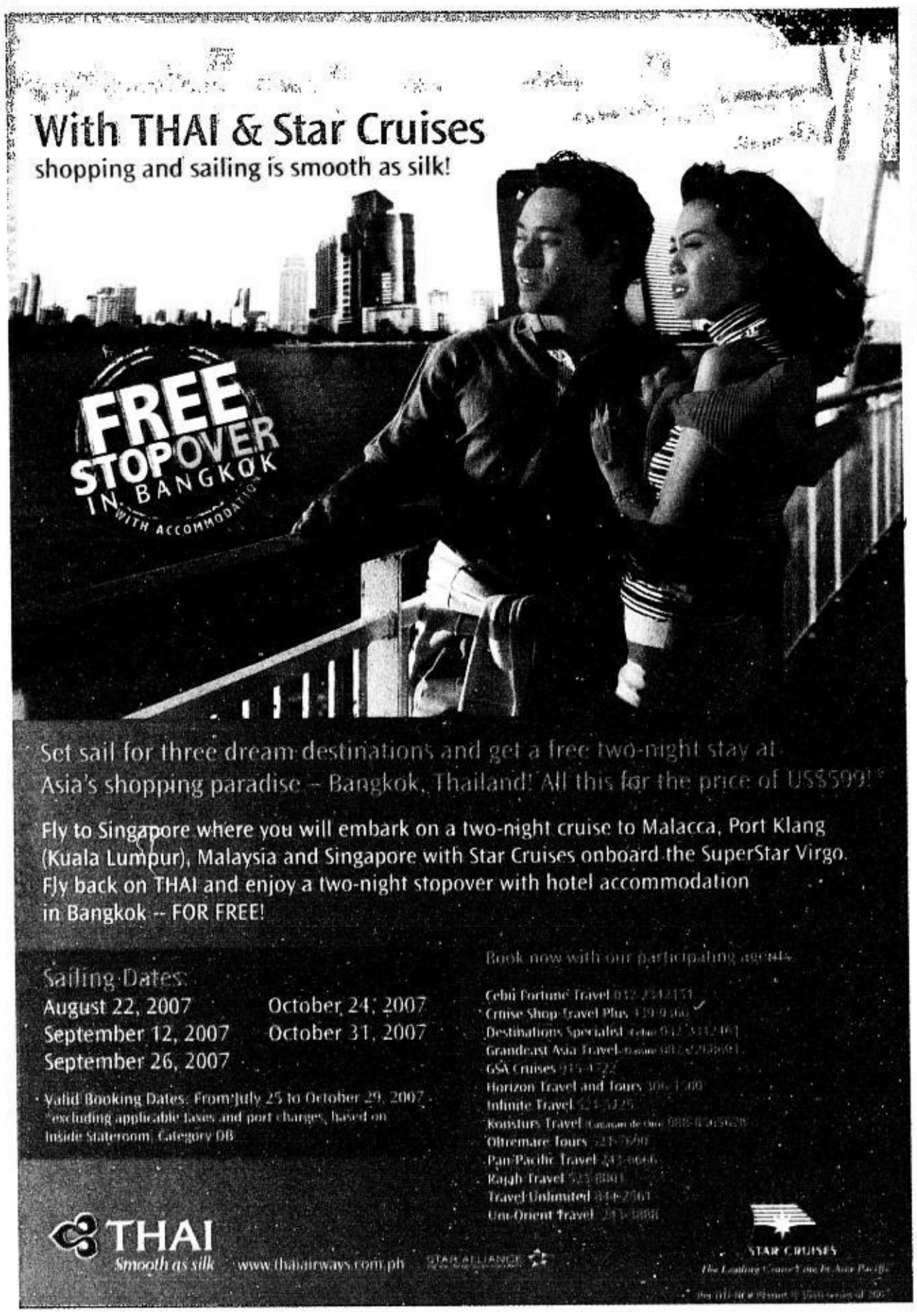

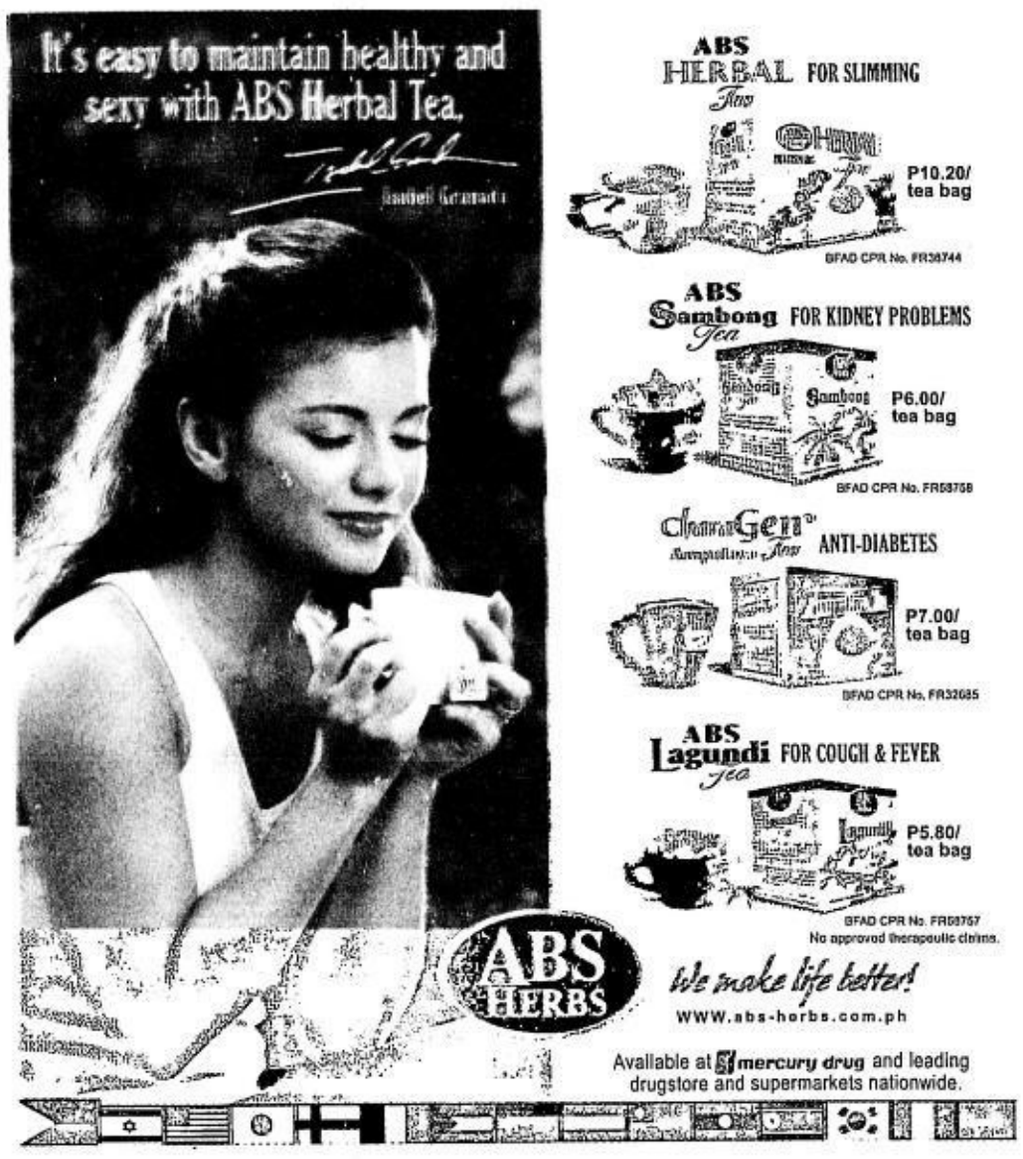

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Teachers tell hard luck tales to NBI

Recruiter promised 100 Leyteños jobs in Italy, Japan and HK

By Tina G. Santos

JUAN MITRA, 41, WAS ALREADY PREPARING TO leave his family and job as a high school principal in Leyte for a more lucrative teaching post in Italy.

"Everything was all set for my trip," Mitra told the INQUIRER yesterday. He was carrying his luggage filled with enough clothes to last him for two years.

Then, the bubble burst. Mitra, principal of the Burauen Comprehensive National High School in Leyte, and around 100 of his town mates, mostly teachers, fell victim to an illegal recruiter.

"There were also lawyers and deans looking for greener pastures who were victimized," he said, adding that they were promised jobs in schools and hotels in Italy.

Around 30 of them went to the National Bureau of Investigation yesterday morning to file a complaint against Elisa Viernes, also known as Elisa Balaguer, Nelia Cionela and Nelia Cinco.

The complainants arrived from Leyte last Friday and were supposed to be fetched by the suspect at the Manila Domestic Airport. Viernes did not show up, forcing them to stay at the houses of their relatives or friends.

"We were supposed to stay at her house on Harvard Street Greenvalley Heights, Marikina City," Mitra said. Failing to contact Viernes, they realized that they had been tricked and went to the NBI.

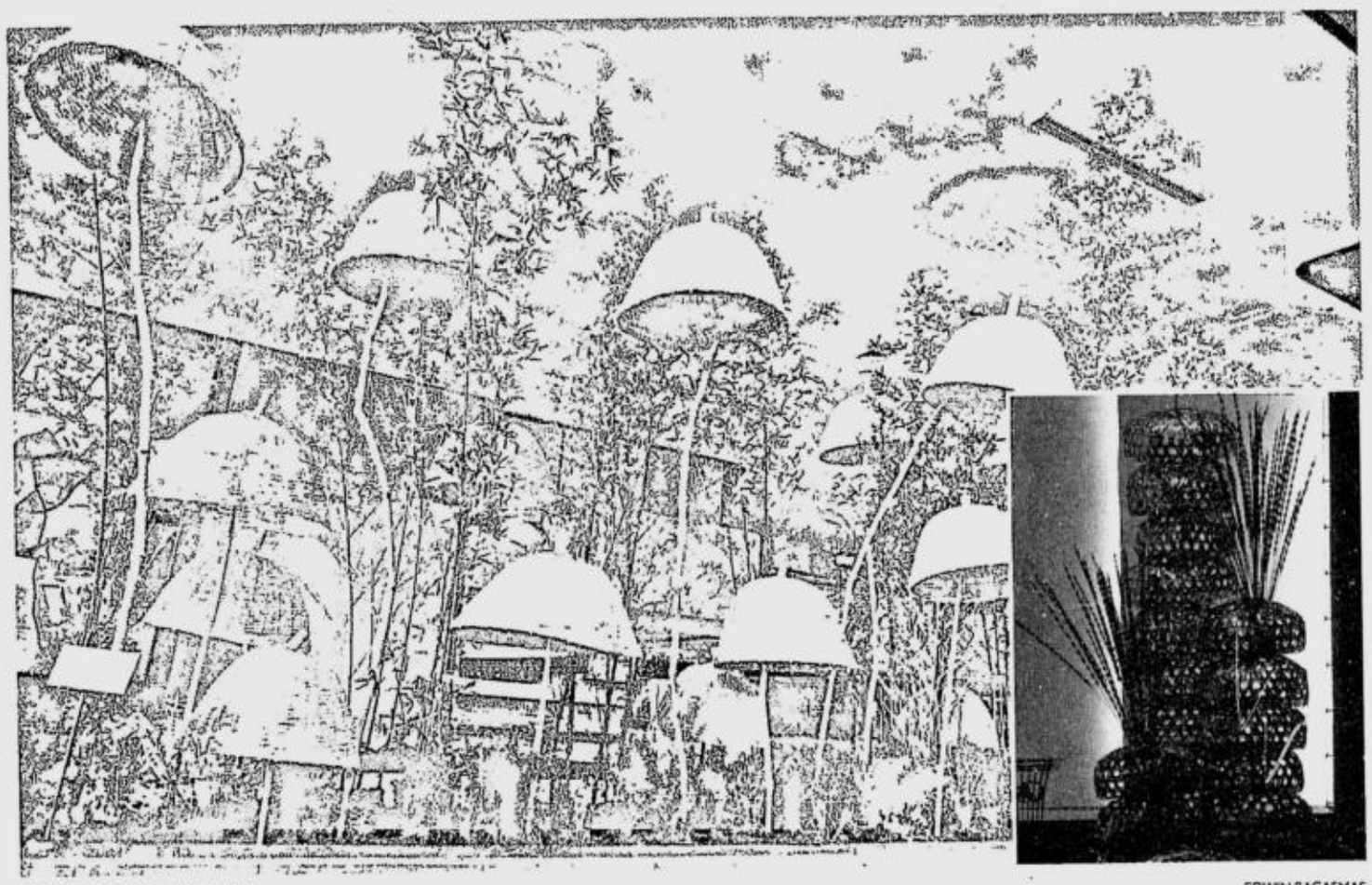
The victims were told to come to Manila last Friday for medical tests scheduled yesterday before they would get their work visas and airplane tickets.

"We were foolish," Mitra told reporters, adding that they were sweet-talked and enticed by Viernes to apply for jobs in Italy, Japan and Hong Kong. "We were told we would be leaving the first week of August," he added.

Mitra, a father of three who has been teaching for 15 years, said the victims paid the suspect P10,000 to P13,000 each as processing fee. "This is apart from the plane fare we spent to get to Manila," he added.

Mitra said he earns P20,000 monthly as a principal, but was promised by a salary of P105,000 in Italy.

"How can you refuse such an offer? Times are hard," he said.



EDWIN BACASMAS

WELCOME TREAT
Delegates to the Asean ministers' meeting that opened yesterday at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City were greeted by a display of the best in bamboo craft designed by floral architect and stylist Rachy Cuna, the only artist invited to display choice Filipiniana designs at the PICC Plenary Hall.

Don't panic, doc tells QC neighborhood

By Allison W. Lopez

A SPECIALIST IN INFECTIONS DISEASES yesterday called on neighbors of a 5-year-old girl from Quezon City, who died of meningococcemia on Saturday, not to panic unless they had direct contact with the victim.

"They should first define their exposure to the child. Only those who came less than three feet of her are at risk of acquiring the disease," said Dr. Mark Torres, a pediatrician at San Lazaro Hospital in Manila.

Meningococcemia is a bacterial infection that is spread from person-to-person but can only be acquired from droplets emitted by a carrier. Torres emphasized that though the disease could result in a victim's death within 24 to 48 hours, many have also recovered.

The doctor said the child was sent home from school on Friday after she suddenly developed a high fever. She was brought to a government hospital in Quezon City before she was transferred the following day to San Lazaro where she died.

Apart from fever, coughing and pain in the joints, victims who contract the disease also develop bruise-like rashes.

Torres said children may be vaccinated against the bacterial infection, especially since some adults who are infected do not show any symptoms of the disease.

Meningococcemia is known to occur more frequently in cold weather.

BALANCING ACT
A staff of the Philippine Science Centrum in Marikina City, the country's first interactive science center, demonstrates the principle of balance to visitors.

RUDY ESPERAS

Barangay captain shot dead in Valenzuela

By Nancy Carvajal

WITH JUST MONTHS TO GO BEFORE the barangay elections in October, things couldn't have been more sad for the family of a barangay captain in Valenzuela City who was shot dead yesterday morning.

"It's too early to say what the motive of the killing was, but it could be politically motivated," city police chief Supt. Billy Beltran said.

Four armed men who claimed to be members of the New People's Army shot Vicente Trinidad, 37, Barangay Punturin chair, at 7:30 a.m. yesterday.

Mayor Sherwin Gatchalian, meanwhile, offered a P500,000 reward for information leading to the suspects.

Trinidad, who was declared dead at the Sta. Clara Montefalco Hospital, was preparing for the flag ceremony when one of the gunmen walked up to him and shot him in the head at close range.

Jessie Villanueva, 25, a resident in the area, was hit by a stray bullet in the head after another suspect shot Trinidad, who was still breathing, in the nape.

Villanueva was also rushed to the hospital where he was declared in serious condition.

The suspects then fled after commandeering a van being driven by Almario de la Cruz of Lolomboy, Bulacan City.

While on board the van, the suspects told De la Cruz and his wife, Teresita, that they were members of the NPA.

The couple later recounted their ordeal to the police.

The suspects, Beltran said, alighted from the van upon reaching Gate 2 of Vista Verde in Caloocan City. They then boarded a tricycle.

Just recently, two barangay leaders in Batangas City were killed in an ambush while another one was shot dead in Quezon City.

DID YOU KNOW

MANILA holds the world record for the biggest number of mothers who simultaneously breastfed their babies in a public place. More than 3,500 mothers nursed their children in May 2006 at the San Andres Sports Complex and Cultural Center in Malate. The event broke the previous record (1,130 mothers breastfeeding simultaneously) in 2002 which was registered in California.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

OVERCOMING BALDNESS

THINK-A-HEAD

No man likes being bald. He may try to ignore it, but deep inside, there's a nagging feeling that life has been unfair. Why me? Why have I gone bald when my friends haven't? Many men sadly accept looking older, being called "Baldie," feeling not so attractive to the opposite sex and putting up with the other handicaps baldness brings – both socially and career wise.

Other men refuse to accept baldness and look for a way out – this is when a wrong decision can lead to an even worse state of frustration and despair. Before you do anything about baldness, read the answers to these most asked questions.

Q. I DON'T LIKE BEING BALD – WHAT CAN I DO?

A. There are basically two ways to go. Some men opt for a surgical hair transplant. Others for the non-surgical alternative. When making the decision there's one essential rule: *THINK-A-HEAD!* - it's not only the immediate results that are so important, it's what your head is going to look like in a few years.

Q. OK, SO WHAT ABOUT SURGICAL TRANSPLANTS?

A. Some say transplants have come a long way since the early days, others say they haven't come far enough. Basically, the surgical process involves taking donor hair from elsewhere on the recipient's head and transplanting it to the balding areas.

Q. DOES TRANSPLANTED HAIR CONTINUE TO GROW?

A. If the surgery has been performed well, the transplanted hair will continue to grow, as it did before it was moved.

Q. CAN ANY BALD MAN HAVE A TRANSPLANT?

A. It's not really possible for a man with advanced baldness because he simply would not have sufficient donor hair to cover his large bald area. Transplants do not increase the number of hairs on a man's head, it's just a case of redistributing them. Transplants are excellent for filling in smaller areas or adding extra hair to thinning parts where there is not expected to be further hairloss.

Q. ARE THERE ANY PROBLEMS WITH TRANSPLANTS?

A. For men whose baldness will not advance further, there seems little downside to having a transplant.

Q. BUT WHAT HAPPENS IF I CONTINUE TO GO BALD?

A. For those whose hairloss continues to advance, there can be significant problems. While the transplanted hair will carry on growing, his other hair becomes thin in contrast as he progressively goes bald. He can have further transplants, but it's likely donor hair will become insufficient as the donor areas do not re-grow hair. The result might be patches of thicker-growing hair among thinning and sparser hair – and this won't take long to happen. The ensuing odd appearance of the man's head can cause him further embarrassment and stress. Speed of hairloss varies, but for most it takes just a few short years from thinning to full-blown baldness.

If a man suffers from Male Pattern Baldness, which usually strikes when he's in his early twenties or thirties, his hairloss will likely continue until he's bald. This is where the catch-phrase *THINK-A-HEAD!* comes into play. Think what your head will look like in a few years after surgical transplanting – will you want to go out in public?

Q. I DON'T WANT THAT RISK, SO WHAT'S THE ALTERNATIVE?

A. The non-surgical alternative is TCR or Transdermal Cosmetic Reconstruction. It's a super-fine synthetic skin with hair seen to be actually growing from it, which is then bonded to your scalp.

Q. IS TCR FOR ANYONE, NO MATTER HOW BALD HE MIGHT BE?

A. Yes, this advanced system is ideal for any state of hairloss and baldness, even for those with only a small amount of hair at the back and sides – the sort of baldness which is really not suitable for a transplant.

Q. HOW REAL IS TCR, WILL IT LOOK GENUINE?

A. TCR is real, natural hair, which looks and feels as if it's growing from your scalp. TCR cannot be distinguished from your own hair, even by touching. You are not "wearing" it, it's part of you.

Q. DOES TCR REQUIRE SPECIAL CARE?

A. To keep TCR perfect, you need only visits to the stylist every two or three weeks, just as any man does for the cutting and styling of his hair. As you get older, your TCR can be subtly aged and grayed, just as your full head of hair would have looked had you not lost any.

Q. IT SEEMS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE – WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS?

A. There are no problems. You can do anything with TCR, it's your new full head of hair. It feels totally natural on your head – you're not aware of it. The only times you'll be reminded that you're no longer bald is when you look in the mirror and how others react to you – remember, you're going to look years younger!

Q. IS TCR AVAILABLE IN MANILA?

A. Yes, it's available in Manila at Svenson, the hair replacement specialists.

Q. IS TCR SUITABLE FOR ME?

A. To find out if your scalp condition and skin type are suitable for the TCR procedure, book a no-cost TCR fact-finding consultation by calling 892-4247.

Bomb story in confessional turns out to be a hoax

By Margaux C. Ortiz

IT WAS A CONFESSION THAT could have shaken the church to its foundations—literally.

Good thing the clergy and parish staff at the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Shrine in New Manila, Quezon City found out that the unidentified man was only joking.

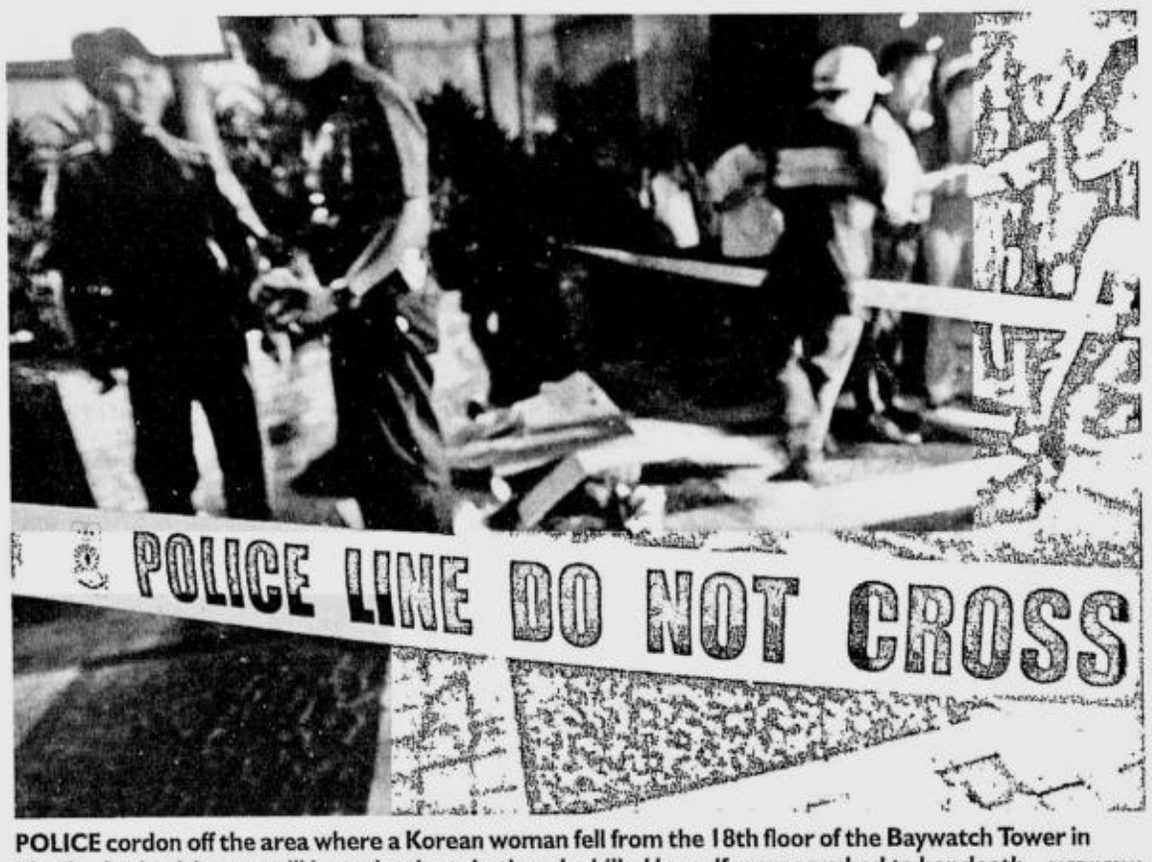
"It turned out that the man, who obviously wanted attention, only aimed to scare the his priest-confessor and the people inside the church," Colette Pugasan, a staff at the parish office, told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Pugasan said the incident took place at around 7 p.m. on Saturday, when the suspect entered the cubicle where parish guest priest Henry D' Suza was hearing confession.

"The man asked Father Henry to forgive him because he was about to blow up the church," Pugasan added.

The priest followed the man out of the confessional box and saw him drop a plastic bag on the church steps. The incident was captured on the church's security camera. A watchman later found out that the bag contained cooked rice.

"It was fortunate we found out about the hoax right away," Pugasan said, adding that there was a wedding at the time of the incident. The suspect, however, was able to escape.



POLICE cordon off the area where a Korean woman fell from the 18th floor of the Baywatch Tower in Manila. Authorities are still investigating whether she killed herself or was pushed to her death. RAFFY LERMA

Korean woman dead after jump from condo

By Tina G. Santos

MANILA POLICEMEN ARE INvestigating if there was foul play in the death of a Korean woman who is believed to have jumped from the 18th floor of a condominium before dawn yesterday.

Police identified the victim as Min Young-bo, 22, a student of De La Salle University and a resident of Baywatch Tower on M.H. Del Pilar Street, Manila.

Companions

An investigation showed that the incident took place at a few minutes after 4 a.m.

The victim was reportedly out on the terrace before she fell to her death.

According to witnesses, the victim's two companions, Jeong Soon-lee, 29, and Mi Hye-joo, 19, tried to stop the victim from jumping.

Witness

"Her friends tried to restrain her but she still managed to jump," police quoted a witness as saying.

But Chief Insp. Alejandro Yanquiling, head of the Manila Police District homicide division, said they were still conducting further investigation to determine if there was foul play in the incident.

Bruise marks

He said that when they recovered the victim's body, she had no underwear on.

Her companions, on the other hand, bore bruises and bite marks on their arms, Yanquiling added.

Rogue cops won't be tolerated—Mayor Lim

By Allison W. Lopez

NINE MEN, SIX OF THEM POlicemen, believed to be behind several incidents of robberies and extortion in Manila were presented yesterday to Mayor Alfredo Lim.

"I mean what I say and I say what I mean. These policemen are a disgrace to the image of the Manila Police District. We will not tolerate them," said Lim.

At the same time, the mayor lauded the MPD for the quick arrest of the suspects.

One of those arrested in separate operations was PO1 Ruben Baratas of the National Capital Region Police Office who is accused of robbing and killing Christopher Lumbang, a 27-year-old businessman, in Tondo on Friday.

Coincidentally, Lim was one of those who stood as sponsors during Lumbang's wedding.

Also arrested were PO1 Rommel Magaspac and PO3 Romeo Relox of Station 10. They were charged with robbing Dolores Nunez of Sta. Cruz of P25,000 in cash and a necklace worth P12,000 on July 26.

On the other hand, PO3 Renato Ramirez, PO3 Edgardo Custado and PO1 Marsie Pagtalunan of Station 2 were charged with graft after they were caught allegedly extorting P10,000 from parking attendant Liwanag Tolentino who had won P100,000 in a TV game show.

Marikina station is PNP choice for project

By Kristine L. Alave

THE MARIKINA CITY POLICE Station has been chosen by the Philippine National Police as the pilot unit for its Model Police Station (MPS) project, a frontline initiative that aims to raise the standard of police services and boost the people's trust in the institution.

As the pilot station, members of the Marikina City police station will undergo capacity-building training on areas such as community policing, instructor and supervisor development, and crime scene processing.

The courses will be taught by instructors from the US Justice Department's International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program, Director Jesus Verzosa, the chief of the PNP directorial staff, said yesterday.

Versoza was at the Marikina City Hall to turn over two patrol cars to the police. Also present at the turnover ceremony were Mayor Marides Fernando, Eastern Police District director Chief Supt. Luizo Ticman, and Marikina City police chief Supt. Sotero Ramos.

In his speech, Verzosa said they chose the Marikina City Police because of its accomplishments. The city police force was recently named Best Police Station and Most Citizen-Friendly in the Eastern Police District.

HERO Boy Scout Hobard Jonn Kennie (center), a student of Chiang Kai Shek College in Tondo, Manila, receives a plaque of recognition from Boy Scout and school officials after he returned a wallet containing thousands of persons to its owner. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Has Marine Corps deteriorated?

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

TODAY, TUESDAY, IS THE EXPIRATION of the ultimatum the government gave the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) to surrender its members who mutilated 10 Marines whom they ambushed in Basilan.

About 5,000 soldiers, spearheaded by Marines, are poised to attack the MILF stronghold in the island province.

If the government delays D-Day for the nth time, it might have a rebellion in its hands.

The comrades of the dead Marines want to exact revenge.

The soldiers want action, not cheap talk at the negotiating table.

* * *

Who was that Marine officer who allegedly ordered planes and helicopters sent to reinforce the beleaguered Marines back to base?

My sources said politics within the Marines was the alleged reason for the withdrawal of air support.

The Marine officer allegedly wanted to put down a fellow officer.

This Marine officer is also reportedly a friend of former Basilan Gov. and now Rep. Wahab Akbar whose men reportedly took part in the ambush.

At the time of the ambush, Lt. Gen. Eugene Cedo, commander of the Western Mindanao Command (Wesmincom), who has the sole authority to order air support for beleaguered troops, was in Cagayan de Oro City purportedly attending a conference.

Cedo reportedly delegated the authority to the Marine officer.

If the report that was given to me is true, the Philippine Marines have deteriorated into a lousy unit whose leaders fight among themselves for personal gain!

* * *

Up to now, the government has not reacted to my column items about the reported involvement of Akbar's men in the ambush and mutilation of the Marines.

In fact, if my sources are to be believed, Akbar's men alone were responsible for the beheading and mutilation.

Why is the government afraid of confronting Akbar?

* * *

Former President Fidel V. Ramos says the economy can grow again and continue to grow if Filipinos can only unite.

FVR knows whereof he speaks.

During his watch, the country became a tiger economy and suffered the least among its neighbors at the height of the Asian financial crisis.

Why? Because Mr. Ramos has the "can do" mentality of a soldier, unlike his successors.

His favorite expression was "*Kaya natin ito* (We will prevail)" as opposed to Erap's "*Patay na tayo* (We're finished)" and GMA's "Hello Garci!"

Success is a matter of attitude.

* * *

There goes the Senate with its Old Boys Club mentality.

The majority of the senators filed a resolution asking the courts to allow one of their own, Antonio Trillanes IV, to attend sessions while in detention on coup d'etat charges.

They want VIP treatment for Trillanes. Why?

Maybe because he's an important person like them and they think the neophyte senator should be given special privileges due him.

These senators forget that Zamboanga del Norte Rep. Romeo Jalosjos, a lawmaker like them—unless they consider members of the House lower in category—was not allowed to attend sessions while his rape conviction was being reviewed.

* * *

My source at the Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) says the agency has found that all products manufactured by Candyman are negative for formalin.

Formalin, a chemical used for embalming, was found in White Rabbit candy made in China.

The chemical reportedly prolongs the shelf life of some products.

Candyman is among the importers of White Rabbit made in China.

But the local White Rabbit made by Candyman is negative for formalin, according to my BFAD source.

METROBRIEFS

'Jueteng' witness sues trader

"JUETENG" witness Sandra Cam has filed estafa charges against a businesswoman who allegedly failed to return the money Cam had given her as down payment for a sports utility vehicle. Cam, who confessed she delivered protection money from jueteng operators to government and police officials during a Senate hearing in 2005, filed the complaint in the Makati City Prosecutors' Office last week. According to her complaint, she gave P368,000 in cash to Angelita Velasco San Luis, a businesswoman who reportedly owns Sapha Oils Inc. in Subic, Zambales, after they were introduced by a common friend, Jane Rivero. The money, Cam said, was for the down payment on a Toyota Fortuner which she wanted to buy. "How could I have known that that woman would be a swindler? You would not know it from the way she talks. She even met me in a respectable hotel," Cam told the INQUIRER during an interview in a safe house. Cam has been in hiding since she identified several of President Macapagal-Arroyo's relatives as among the people she delivered jueteng protection money to.

Julie M. Aurelio

Man killed over microphone

A 63-YEAR-OLD man attacked and killed another elderly man after they fought over who got to sing a song Sunday night in a bar in Makati City. Lito Gargaritano, 64, of Mapayapa Street, Barangay San Antonio, died after he was shot three times by Jose Tiongson, of Catmon Street in the same barangay. A report from the Makati City police showed that the incident happened at around 9:45 p.m. Sunday inside Jonel's Eatery on Kamagong Street. After drinking with Tiongson inside the establishment, Gargaritano decided he wanted to sing and loaded P50 into a videoke machine. But while he was choosing a song, Tiongson allegedly grabbed the microphone, leading to an argument between the two men. The suspect shot the victim and then fled.

Jeannette I. Andrade

QC gov't looking for new sites

THE QUEZON City government is set to acquire more property to develop into housing sites for the poor. Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. said among the lots being considered are the Villanueva property at Matandang Balara and the 1,727-sq m lot in Sitio Banlat, Barangay Tandang Sora. "The city government plans to construct 60 row houses that would benefit low-income City Hall and national government employees," Belmonte said. He added that the Banlat property could be developed into an ideal site for the construction of two medium-rise buildings. Belmonte said that in the meantime, 160 Quezon City Hall employees would benefit from the local government's housing project in Barangay Vasra, Project 6. The second phase of the project, which is nearing completion, will be inaugurated on Aug. 19. Phase I was finished last May, according to the city's Housing and Urban Renewal Authority.

Margaux C. Ortiz

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PS Please don't send tips on criminal activities and scams. Call the police.

INQUIRER

Taliban threaten to start killing 22 hostages

GHAZNI, AFGHANISTAN—TALKS to free 22 South Koreans held by the Taliban were deadlocked Monday ahead of a noon (0730 GMT) deadline by which the militants said they would start killing the Christian hostages.

Negotiations to save the lives of the group captured in southern Afghanistan 13 days ago had stalled over the rebels' demand that some of their men be freed from Afghan jails, the head of the government's negotiating team said.

"The government policy is not to release prisoners but the Taliban are still asking for prisoners," Mahmood Gailani, a parliamentarian, said.

The Taliban had also rejected a government condition that they release the 16 women in the group before any of their demands would be considered, he said.

"The talks are going nowhere right now. Maybe they will not succeed," Gailani said. The Taliban "refused any agreement," he said.

The Taliban, which last week shot dead the leader of the group—a 42-year-old Presbyterian pastor—announced its "last" deadline on Sunday. Four others lapsed without incident.

"We give a last deadline of tomorrow (Monday) 12 o'clock to the Afghan government to give us their last word if they can release our eight suggested prisoners," Taliban spokesperson Yousuf Ahmadi said on Sunday night.

"Otherwise we will start killing the hostages," Ahmadi said. He could not be reached Monday for comment.

Kabul was roundly condemned when it released five Taliban prisoners in March to free an Italian hostage, and President Hamid Karzai vowed afterwards such a deal would not be repeated.

An Afghan official said on condition of anonymity Monday that the government could resort to military action to free the South Koreans should talks fail.

The Christians, said to be mostly in their 20s and 30s, were kidnapped July 19 while traveling through the risky Ghazni province by bus. They were on an aid mission to devoutly Islamic Afghanistan.

They had been divided into small groups and were being held in three different provinces, Ahmadi said Sunday.

The militants are also holding a German engineer, kidnapped in Wardak province near Kabul a day before the South Koreans, and have also demanded the release of prisoners to save his life.

He was captured with a German colleague who died four days later. The Taliban said they shot him. Four Afghans captured with the engineers are also being held. *AFP*

RELATIVES of South Koreans kidnapped in Afghanistan weep as they met family members of Bae Hyung-kyu who was killed by the Taliban last week. Bae's body was to return home Monday, his family said. AP

Warming doubles number of hurricanes, study finds

WASHINGTON—GLOBAL WARMING's effect on wind patterns and sea temperatures have nearly doubled the number of hurricanes a year in the Atlantic Ocean over the past century, says a new study by US scientists.

Excerpts from the study by Greg Holland of the National Center for Atmospheric Research and Peter Webster of Georgia Institute of Technology were released in the United States late Sunday.

The analysis identifies three periods since 1900, during which the average number of hurricanes and tropical storms increased dramatically and then remained elevated and relatively steady.

The first period, between 1900 and 1930, saw an average of six Atlantic tropical cyclones, of which four were hurricanes and two were tropical storms—the next category down.

From 1930 to 1940, the authors point out, the annual average increased to 10, consisting of five hurricanes and five tropical storms.

In the most recent period, from 1995 to 2005, the average reached 15, of which eight were hurricanes and seven were tropical storms.

This latter period, Holland and Webster caution, has not yet stabilized, which means the average hurricane season may be more active in the future.

"These numbers are a strong indication that climate change is a major factor in the increasing number of Atlantic hurricanes," Holland said in a statement.

The scientists see a strong correlation between the spike in storm activity and rising sea surface temperatures, which "feed" hurricanes.

Over the last 100 years, these temperatures have risen by about 1.3 degrees Fahrenheit, or 0.7 degrees Celsius, the study asserts.

The temperatures rose approximately 0.7 degrees Fahrenheit, or 0.4 degrees Celsius, in a period leading up to 1930, which was marked by some of the deadliest storms to hit the Atlantic Coast of the United States. *AFP*

Legendary filmmaker Bergman dies at 89

STOCKHOLM—INGMAR BERGMAN, one of the most influential film directors of the 20th century, died Monday at his home on the Swedish island of Faaro, his daughter Eva told the TT news agency. He was 89.

Bergman was widely acclaimed for films such as "The Seventh Seal" (1957) and "Fanny and Alexander" (1982), which won four Oscars, including for Best Foreign Language Film.

Eva Bergman said her father had passed away "peacefully," but did not specify the cause of death. The Dagens Nyeter newspaper reported on its website that he died at around 7 a.m. (0500 GMT).

For many movie buffs, Bergman was the greatest of the authorial filmmakers of the 1950s and 1960s, outranking even such figures as Federico Fellini, Luis Bunuel or Jean-Luc Godard.

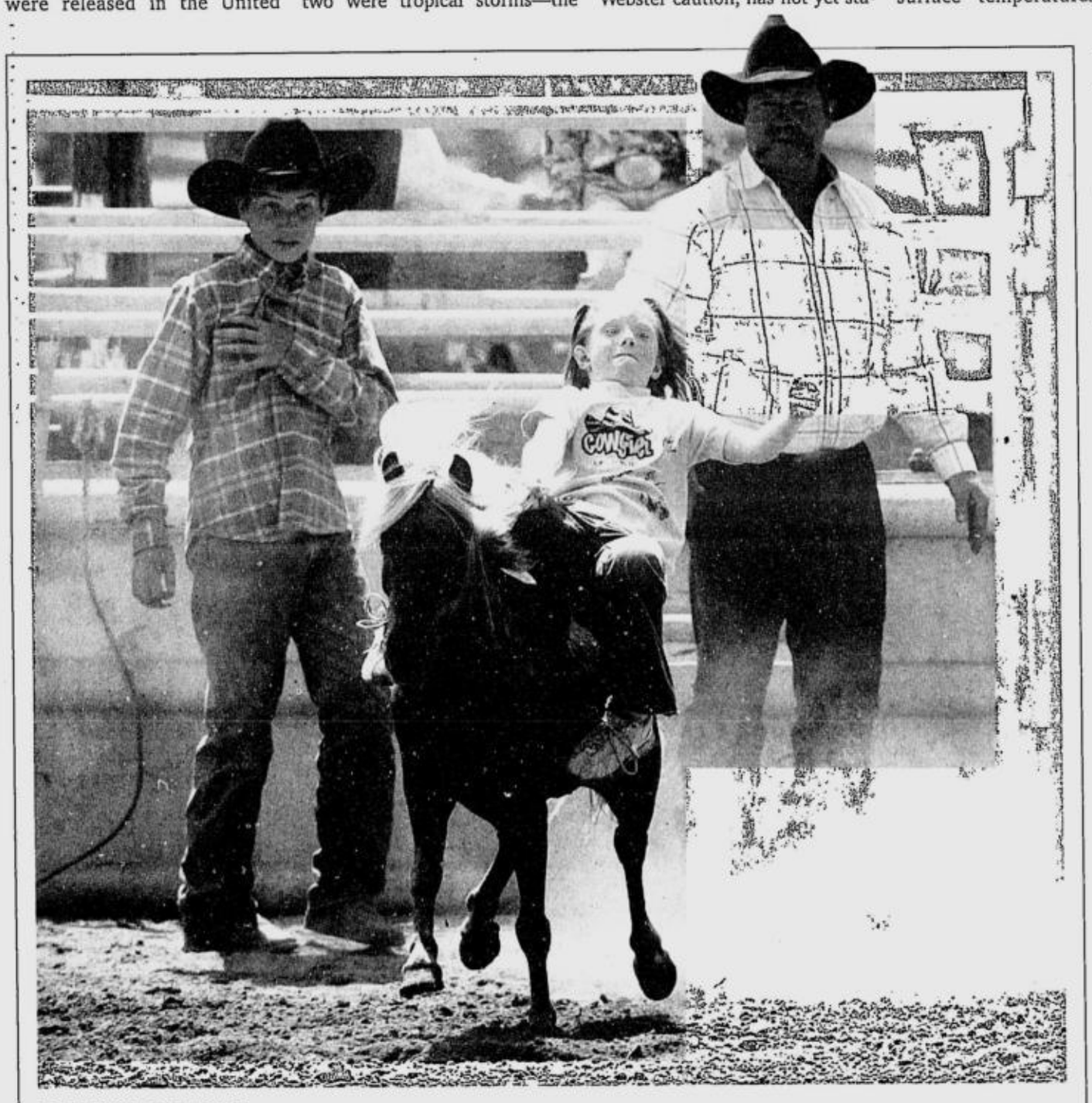
The demanding nature of his work, in particular the gravity of his themes, was such that the general public found him remote, and he was accused in his homeland of being partly responsible for Sweden being presented as a country of neurotics.

Ernst Ingmar Bergman was born in Uppsala, Sweden, on July 14, 1918, the second of three children.

His strict childhood—his father Erik was a clergyman—and family relationships influenced him profoundly and were reflected in all his work.

At Stockholm University he discovered his vocation when he chose the dramatic society over his literature and art history classes.

He directed his first film "Crisis" in 1945 but it was not until 1956 that he won international acclaim when "Smiles of a Summer Night" was shown at the Cannes Festival. For more than three decades he produced an average of a movie a year. *AFP*



RIDE 'EM, COWGIRL
Shelsey Hoene, 7, of Garden Valley, Idaho, competes in the mini-horse riding event on the final day of the Idaho Women's Pro Rodeo on July 29 in Crouch, Idaho. AP

Israel to get $30B US aid to preserve its superiority

JERUSALEM—PRIME MINISTER EHUD Olmert announced a new $30-billion US defense package on Sunday to preserve Israel's regional military superiority, as Washington readied an Arab arms deal to counter Iran.

The sizeable hike to annual US defense and military aid to its closest Middle East ally was unveiled by the beleaguered Olmert amid reports of a hefty US arms deal with Saudi Arabia.

"In my last meeting with the president of the United States, we agreed that the aid would stand at $30 billion over the next 10 years, meaning over $3 billion a year, starting next year," Olmert said.

"This is an increase of over 25 percent in the military and defense aid of the United States to Israel," he said, describing the package as a considerable improvement and very important element for national security.

"Other than the increase in aid, we received an explicit and detailed commitment to guarantee Israel's qualitative advantage over other Arab states," said Olmert, whose approval ratings have sunk to single digits amid continuing anger at his government's handling of last summer's Lebanon war.

Current US defense aid to Israel stands at $2.4 billion a year. The two countries are increasingly alarmed by Iran's nuclear ambitions—which have already incurred international economic sanctions.

Olmert last met Bush at the White House on June 19, when a senior Israeli government source said the new aid scheme was decided upon.

A senior US defense official has said that Washington is readying a major arms package for Saudi Arabia with an eye to countering the changing threat from Tehran, Israel's arch foe and determined to press a nuclear agenda. *AFP*

UK's Brown seeks US support for Darfur plan

CAMP DAVID—BRITAIN'S NEW LEADER Gordon Brown will seek support for a peace package for Sudan's Darfur region in his first talks with US President George W. Bush on Sunday, but the Iraq conflict will hang heavy over their meeting.

The British prime minister arrived at Camp David, the US presidential retreat, on Sunday and was due to hold a first session of talks with Bush over dinner.

As Brown got off the helicopter, he was greeted by a color guard and Bush shook his hand.

"It's a great pleasure to be here at Camp David because there's so much history associated with it," Brown said.

Aides to Brown say he wants to focus on ending the Darfur conflict and breaking a deadlock in global trade liberalization talks in his first face-to-face meeting with Bush since he succeeded Tony Blair as prime minister last month.

Brown, with the support of French President Nicolas Sarkozy, is proposing a package of measures to try to end the conflict in Darfur.

It includes a United Nations Security Council resolution for an African Union-United Nations peacekeeping force, an immediate ceasefire, restarting a peace process and an economic aid package for Darfur, a British government source said.

It would also hold out the threat of sanctions against the Sudanese government if it failed to cooperate.

But Brown and Bush are unlikely to be able to divert the media's attention from Iraq—the conflict that defined Bush's relationship with Blair.

Blair stood shoulder to shoulder with Bush during the 2003 invasion of Iraq, and Britain still has thousands of soldiers in the South of the country.

Growing opposition to the Iraq war undermined Blair's popularity in Britain and contributed to his decision to step down early after a decade in office.

Speculation Brown may want to end Britain's military involvement in Iraq resurfaced on Sunday with a report in the Sunday Times newspaper that Brown's chief foreign policy adviser had sounded out US foreign policy experts on the possibility of an early British withdrawal.

Brown's spokesperson said the prime minister would not unveil a plan to pull out British troops and said there had been no change in the government's position. *Reuters*

BUSH welcoming Brown to the presidential retreat at Camp David, Md., on July 29. AP

Down the slippery slope of genetically altered animals

By Andrew Pollack

THIS LITTLE PIGGY'S MANURE causes less pollution. This little piggy produces extra milk for her babies. And this little piggy makes fatty acids normally found in fish, so that its bacon might actually be good for you.

The three pigs, living in experimental farmyards, are among the genetically engineered animals whose meat might one day turn up on American dinner plates. Bioengineers have also developed salmon that grow to market weight in about half the typical time, disease-resistant cows and catfish needing fewer antibiotics, and goats whose milk might help ward off infections in children.

Only now, though, do federal officials seem to be getting serious about drafting rules to determine whether and how such foods can safely enter the food supply.

Some scientists and biotechnology executives say that by having the Food and Drug Administration spell out the rules, big investors would finally be willing to put up money to create a market in so-called transgenic livestock.

"Right now, it's very hard to get any corporate investment," said James D. Murray, a professor at the University of California, Davis, who developed the goats with infection-fighting milk. "What studies do you need to do? What are they looking for?" he said, referring to regulators. "That stuff's not there."

But some experts caution that even if the FDA clears the regulatory path, investors and agribusiness might still shy away. Many fear that consumers would shun foods from transgenic animals, sometimes referred to as genetically modified organisms, or GMOs.

"The companies we have spoken to have gone organic, and they are very concerned, at least up to the present time, of having GMO associated with their name," said Cecil W. Forsberg, a professor at the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada, who helped developed the "Enviropig" with the cleaner manure. Smithfield Foods, for one, the world's largest hog producer and pork processor, says it is doing no research on genetically engineered animals.

The federal guidelines would come after more than 15 years of talks and false starts at the FDA, a delay irking developers of the animals but also critics of biotechnology.

Even now, the FDA will not say when the rules will be ready.

"We want to get it out, but we also want to get it right," said Julie Zawisza, a spokesperson for the agency. *NYT*

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Abe dealt crushing defeat, won't quit

TOKYO—PRIME MINISTER SHINZO ABE'S CONSERVative ruling camp suffered a crushing defeat in a Japanese upper house election on Sunday but the 52-year-old leader insisted he would stay in his job.

"I am determined to carry out my promises although the situation is severe," a weary and drawn-looking Abe said after acknowledging he was responsible for the huge loss.

"We need to restore the people's trust in the country and the government." Abe's second-in-command resigned and analysts said Abe would face pressure to follow suit.

Voters angry over a string of government scandals and gaffes, and government bungling of pension records, stripped Abe's coalition of its upper house majority in his first big electoral test since taking office 10 months ago.

Abe's coalition will not be ousted from government by a loss in the upper house because it has a huge majority in the more powerful lower chamber.

But without control of the upper chamber, where the main opposition Democratic Party will now have the most seats, laws will be hard to enact, threatening policy deadlock.

Kyodo news agency reported Abe would reshuffle his Cabinet, possibly in late August.

"We need to discuss issues closely with the Democratic Party in the upper house and listen to them when necessary," said Abe.

Democratic Party leader Ichiro Ozawa, who has heart problems, failed to put in a public appearance, electing to rest after a tough campaign schedule.

Media said the LDP and its partner, New Komeito, won 46 seats compared to 60 for the Democrats.

The coalition needed 64 to keep their majority in the upper house where half of the 242 seats were up for grabs.

The LDP won 37 seats, media said, worse than the loss in 1998 that forced Ryutaro Hashimoto to resign as prime minister.

The party's No. 2 and its de facto campaign manager, Hidenao Nakagawa, resigned as secretary general to take the blame for the abysmal showing.

Critics say Abe, who pledged to boost Japan's security profile, rewrite its pacifist constitution and nurture patriotism in schools, was out of touch with voters.

Ozawa, a pugnacious veteran who bolted from the LDP 14 years ago, had pledged to shrink income gaps, protect the weak and help farmers—a group that had long supported the LDP.

The 65-year-old saw a doctor and was to rest for a day or two to recover from fatigue, a party official said.

Analysts said the threat of policy paralysis could hurt Tokyo shares, boost bonds and add to doubts about the timing of Japan's next interest rate hike. But investors were more focused on a broader shake-out triggered by problems in US credit markets.

Some in Abe's party expressed dismay at his decision to stay. Analysts said the LDP was short of viable successors.

Abe, Japan's first leader born after World War II, won early praise for improving ties with Beijing and Seoul that had chilled under Junichiro Koizumi, his predecessor.

But doubts about his leadership were fanned by gaffes and scandals that led two Cabinet members to resign and one to commit suicide, as well as revelations that the government had lost track of millions of pension premium payments.

"A fresh start with a new lineup," ran the headline over a front-page editorial in the conservative daily Sankei Shimbun.

"The first tasks facing Prime Minister Abe are to reflect on the election results and to appoint new staff to the Cabinet and party posts. So many of the Abe administration's problems are rooted in bad personnel decisions," the editorial said.

A weakened ruling bloc is expected to try to bolster its hand by wooing independents and conservatives in the Democratic Party—a mixed bag of former LDP lawmakers, ex-socialists and young conservatives, some of whom are seen as ripe for poaching. *Reuters*

ABE AFP

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Australia won't apologize to freed terror suspect doctor

SYDNEY—AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER John Howard Monday dismissed calls for an inquiry into the bungled case of an Indian doctor suspected of terrorism, and said the Muslim medic should not expect an apology.

Mohamed Haneef was held for more than three weeks and charged with providing "reckless" support to a terror group in connection with last month's failed car bombings in London and Glasgow.

But the case against him collapsed on Friday due to lack of evidence, and he was cleared of the charge and allowed to fly home.

Upon his arrival in India on Sunday, the 27-year-old said he had been traumatized by the experience, which included having his work visa revoked.

HANEEF AFP

"I have been victimized by Australian authorities," he told waiting media.

But Howard defended Australia's handling of the case, the first under tough new antiterror laws, saying that when it came to preventing attacks, it was "better to be safe than sorry."

"Australia will not be apologizing to Dr. Haneef," he told reporters.

"Dr. Haneef was not victimized and Australia's international reputation has not been harmed by this 'mis-start' to its new antiterrorism laws."

Immigration Minister Kevin Andrews, who has drawn fierce criticism for withdrawing Haneef's working visa just hours after he was granted bail on the terror charge, also said he would not be apologizing to the doctor. *AFP*

Coffee, exercise may prevent skin cancer, says study

WASHINGTON—DRINKING COFFEE AND exercising may prevent skin cancer by killing off cells damaged by the sun's ultraviolet-B (UVB) radiation, said a study of hairless laboratory mice published Monday.

The coffee-exercise combination produced a "dramatic" fourfold difference in apoptosis—the programmed death of precancerous cells—between laboratory mice that did and did not follow the regime, said the researchers of New Jersey's Rutgers University.

Researchers compared UVB radiation effects on groups of hairless mice that drank caffeinated water (the human equivalent of one or two cups of coffee a day); that exercised on a running wheel; that had caffeine and ran; and a control group that had no caffeine or exercise at all.

Compared to the control group, mice that only drank coffee showed a 95 percent increase in UVB-induced apoptosis, those that only exercised showed a 120 percent increase, while those who drank and exercised showed an almost 400 percent increase.

"The differences between the groups in the formation of UVB-induced apoptotic cells—those cells derailed from the track leading to skin cancer—were quite dramatic," said Allan Conney, one of the study's authors. *AFP*

WHAT'S INSIDE
Contador looks ahead to more Tour victories /A26

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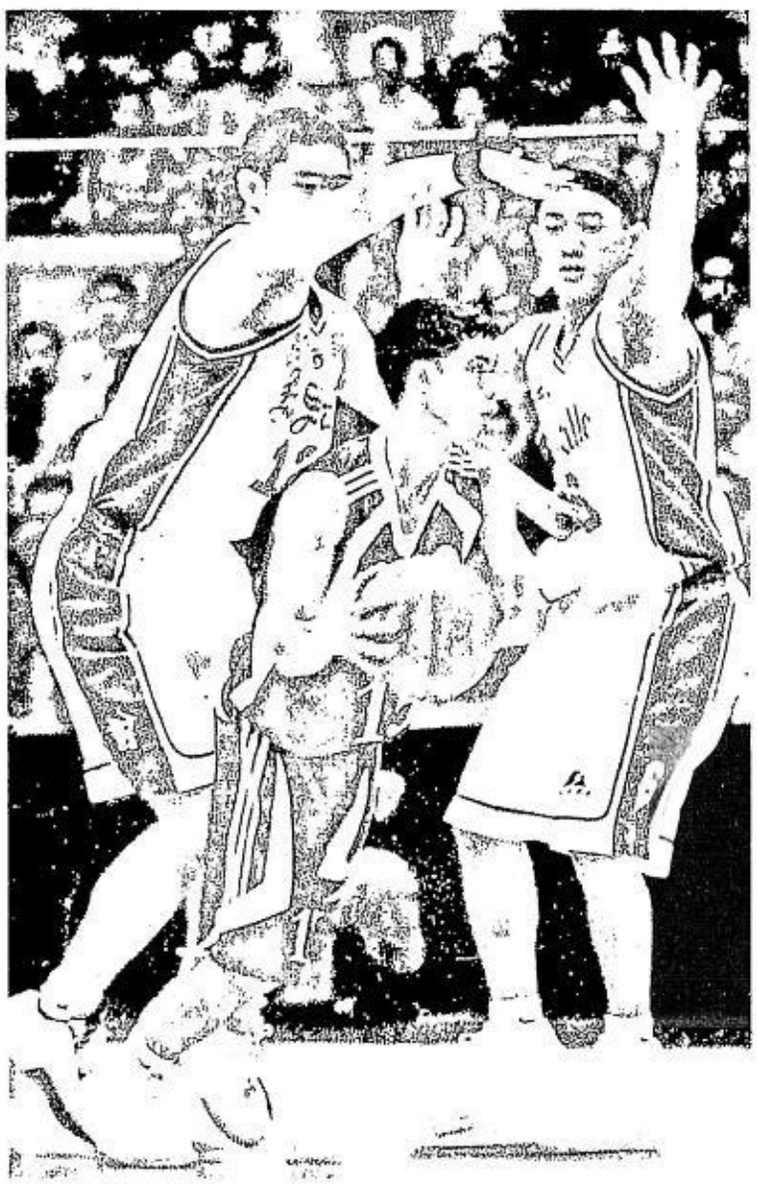
Gulbis bags maiden title /A26



ATENEO sentinel Emmanuel Monfort drives past La Salle's Kish Co (left) and JV Casio during the two teams' disputed game last week. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

UAAP defers decision on La Salle protest

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE ANIMOSITY IS BREWING LONGER AS UAAP officials said yesterday they will need several more days to decide on the game protest La Salle lodged against arch rival Ateneo in the men's basketball competition.

"The decision might be on Wednesday or Thursday," league commissioner Ed Cordero said yesterday.

In an official protest submitted on Saturday, La Salle argued that Ateneo fielded foreign players Kirk Long and Zion Laterre at the same time in the blockbuster match won by the Eagles, 80-77, in overtime.

Cordero started gathering data yesterday on the Archers' allegation that the Eagles violated the league rule that limits each team to play only one foreign player at any given time.

Laterre is an Australian forward, while Long is an American freshman guard.

"My office will review the tape, interview [the personalities involved] if necessary, study pertinent rules and guidelines," said Cordero.

As soon as Cordero reaches a decision on the retention or reversal of the game results, the technical committee and the league board will review his findings.

"The commissioner doesn't want to rush things because of the implications that his decision would have," said technical committee head Kiko Diaz. "The committee will meet once a decision or recommendation has been made."

"They will discuss [my decision], then the board will either uphold or reject it," said Cordero.

La Salle and Ateneo each have their own versions of the game sequence that transpired late in the first half of the Thursday showdown between the country's fiercest collegiate rivals.

Ateneo coach Norman Black maintained that, although a substitution had been called, Long did not step inside the court together with Laterre. He ordered Reyes back in since only four players were on the court.

The referees called a technical foul on Reyes for entering the court without permission from the officials' table.

But La Salle coach Franz Pumaren pointed out that the game had resumed when Black, realizing his team's error, physically pulled Long back to the sidelines and ordered Reyes to rush back in.

"On our part, that's what we saw that's why we filed a protest," Pumaren said. "It can be clearly seen on tape."

Pacman files P30-M libel case

FILIPINO RING HERO MANNY PACQUIAO yesterday filed a P30-million libel case against sportswriter Nick Giongco of the Manila Bulletin.

The case, which stemmed from an article written by Giongco in the newspaper's July 25 issue, was filed in Gen. Santos City, according to Pacquiao's lawyer Franklin Gacal.

One of the items that caught the ire of the WBC international super-featherweight titlist was the phrase, "he is reported to be a compulsive gambler and is known to bet hundreds of thousands in casinos, cockfighting and billiards."

Pacquiao is set to leave for the United States on Wednesday.

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Baseball team may be left behind over chocolates?

By June Navarro

FOR EATING TOO MUCH CHOCOLATE, THE NATIONAL BASEBALL TEAM MAY fail to defend its Southeast Asian Games title.

A high-ranking Philippine Olympic Committee official revealed yesterday that the Olympic body got turned off when members of the team carted away loads of free chocolates during the 15th Asian Games in Doha, Qatar, in December 2006.

"When the organizers told us about it, we were really humiliated," said the POC source, who requested anonymity.

POC secretary general Steve Hontiveros gave another reason, however: The national clouters' failure to turn in a good performance after their gold-medal feat in the 2005 Manila SEAG.

"It doesn't mean that if they passed the criteria, they are already qualified," said Hontiveros. "The POC would like to know how the team has progressed after the Asian Games.

"We also want to know about the composition of the new team."

Based on the guidelines laid out by the POC-PSC task force, medalists in the SEAG are already qualified to vie in the Thailand Games on Dec. 6-16 unless the performance of the team or athlete retrogressed in the months leading to the Games.

But the POC began to raise doubts on the ability of the baseball squad, headed by Philippine Amateur Baseball Association president Hector Navasero, to defend the crown when it failed to win a single game in the last Asiad.

Thailand made it worse by thumping Navasero's troops, 8-1, during their final Asiad assignment.

Despite the criticisms, though, the RP batters have found an ally in the Philippine Sports Commission.

"They are the defending champions," said deputy chef de mission Ritchie Garcia. "As far as the PSC is concerned, our baseball players are qualified to join the SEAG."

The members of the baseball squad in the Asiad were Ernesto Binarao, Roel Empacis, Ferdinand Recto, Ruben Angeles, Roy Baclay, Ruel Batuto, Edmer Del Socorro, Darwin Dela Calzada, Wilfredo Hidalgo Jr., Charlie Labrador, Joseph Orillana, Junifer Pinero, Jonash Ponce, Fulgencio Rances Jr., Rommel Roja, Virgilio Roxas, Nino Tator and Alejandro Velasquez.

LESS-THAN-PERFECT LEAP: The Philippines' Joebert Delicano kicks up a cloud of fine sand as he fouls on his leap in the 17th Asian Athletics Championships in Amman, Jordan, recently. Delicano wound up seventh overall with a 7.68-meter effort. Saudi ARabia's Mohammed Salman H. Al Khuwaidi took the gold with 8.16m. REUTERS

Pagulayan nips Gabica, puts away Cebu title

PAGULAYAN

FORMER WORLD and US Open 9-ball champion Alex Pagulayan, putting his worries behind, bested Antonio Gabica, 13-10, in the finals late Sunday to rule the Cebu Open at the SM Cebu Trade Hall in Cebu City.

Pagulayan, who was stricken off the list of Filipino bets in the Guinness Tour by the Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines, bagged the winner's purse of P160,000.

"Despite the controversy I'm facing right now, I played my best to win," said Pagulayan, who was accused of conduct unbecoming by the BSCP in the recent Singapore leg of the Guinness Tour.

The BSCP replaced Pagulayan with Jeffrey de Luna for the fifth and concluding leg of the Guinness Tour set Aug. 3-5 in Shanghai.

Pagulayan was seen clowning around in his semifinal loss to Mindanao-born Malaysian Ibrahim Bin Amir in Singapore last July 16.

Gabica, the 2006 Doha Asian Games 9-ball gold medalist, settled for P80,000.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

Squires, Cubs trounce rivals

GAMES TOMORROW (The Arena)
2 p.m.—Mapua vs Jose Rizal (Srs)
4 p.m.—Letran vs Perpetual (Srs)

By Marc Anthony Reyes

KEVIN ALAS HIT SIX THREE-POINTERS for a game-high 30 points as Letran routed Perpetual Help, 98-80, yesterday and kept top spot in NCAA junior basketball at The Arena in San Juan.

The 6-foot-2 Alas scored 19 of his output in the third quarter for the Knights who poured 36 points in the third quarter to rip the game apart, 82-57, from a close 46-40 halftime margin.

The younger of the two Alases in the Squires lineup, Kevin, who is averaging 25.6 points per game, also had seven rebounds and two steals.

Elder brother Kristoffer turned in 18 points and 11 rebounds, while John Noble and Glenn Khobuntin added 14 points each for the Squires' fifth straight victory and a 5-1 record.

Jolangcob finished with 27 points and 10 assists, while Mojado chipped in 21 points for the Alatelletes, who fell to 1-6.

In the second game, Thomas Babilo powered San Beda to a 91-73 win over CSB-La Salle Green Hills.

Defending champion San Sebastian duplicated its first-round conquest of Jose Rizal, 79-71, in the nightcap.

The scores:

First Game

LETRAN 98—Alas, Ke. 30, Alas, Kr. 18, Khobuntin 14, Noble 14, San Jose 7, Munsayac 6, Bagsit 3, Javier 2, Roxas 2, De Guia 2, Romeo 0, Reforsado 0, Reyes 0.

PERPETUAL 80—Jolangcob 27, Mojado 21, Valentin 7, Eriobu 7, Pabillano 4, Mancio 4, Pagkalinawan 4, Manzanero 2, Biscocho 2, Dizon 1, Francisco 1, Dejarasco 0.

Quarters: 23-26, 46-40, 82-57, 98-80

Second Game

SAN BEDA 91—Babilonia 16, Dela Cruz 10, Revilla 10, Salva 10, Bernas 9, Lobaton 8, Panaligan 6, Asinas 5, Monteclaro 5, Ayala 4, Palma 4, Altamirano 2, Figuracion 2, Banal 0, Del Rosario 0.

CSB-LSGH 73—Mig. Reyes 20, Mart. Reyes 18, Marc. Reyes 10, Nicolas 7, Dela Paz 6, Malimban 4, Asuncion 3, Yulo 3, Quebral 2, Flores 0, Seno 0, Dimaculangan 0.

Quarters: 20-17, 39-31, 67-40, 91-73

Third Game

SAN SEBASTIAN 79—Bringas 24, Buenafe 21, Delgado Je. 11, Gusi 11, Cam 6, Bautista 2, Andrada 2, Estrada 2, Delgado Jo. 0, Ortuoste 0, Ramsey 0.

JOSE RIZAL 71—Cipriano 18, Agovida 17, Madlangbayan 17, Regis 10, Camar 7, Reyes 2, Vigil 0, Matias 0, Villasper 0, Cataluna 0.

Quarters: 14-11, 37-34, 54-51, 79-71

Bustamante pockets ₱300,000 in Korea

RISING FILIPINO STAR JOVEN BUSTAMANTE downed Japanese Go Takami, 7-3, in the finals late Sunday to rule the 4th annual Korea International Championships at the Seoul Palace Hotel in South Korea.

The victory was worth $7,000 (about P315,000) for the 28-year-old Joven, a distant relative of former world No. 1 Francisco "Django" Bustamante.

Joven, the 2004 Abu Dhabi 8-ball champion and 2007 World 8-Ball third placer, disposed of Bugsy stablemate Carlo Biado, 7-4, in the semifinals.

Joven and Carlo are scheduled to arrive from Seoul last night, according to their manager Perry Mariano.

They will compete in the country's first ever Poker Pool Tour dubbed as Sargo's Pool Classics on Aug. 11 at Bugsy Lair's Pool Haus in Quezon City

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

Amonsot banned in Nevada?

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

WHAT MORE CAN I SAY? THE BRAIN injury suffered recently by Filipino boxer Czar Amonsot emphasized once more the hazards of professional boxing.

Not only that, another Filipino fighter, Z Gorres, has been diagnosed as suffering from a tear retina. He was scheduled to fight in the World Cup of Boxing on Aug. 11 in Sacramento, California.

Two Sundays ago, the 21-year-old Amonsot lost to undefeated Michael Katsidis of Australia in their 12-round action-packed encounter for the World Boxing Organization interim lightweight championship at the Mandalay Bay Center in Las Vegas.

Both boxers were rushed to the hospital where they underwent a routine post-fight checkup mandated by the Nevada State Athletic Commission. Initial findings showed Amonsot suffered a bleeding in his brain which, although not life-threatening, could threaten his ring career.

Neurologist Dr. Debra Nelson later declared Amonsot out of danger, but she told the gutsy Filipino to take a rest for a few more months before fighting again.

I also gathered that the Nevada commission would impose a lifetime ban on Amonsot following that fight.

***

I covered pro boxing for many years, perhaps longer than I should have because of my respect and admiration for the boxers. Generally speaking, most boxers come from bitter poverty. And they work harder and sacrifice more than any other athletes.

However, I made up my mind to walk away from pro boxing. Why?

As I wrote some months back, my decision to break my romance with pro boxing was based mainly on moral and medical grounds. I could no longer stomach the growing list of injuries and deaths atop the ring. I also felt the boxers were being exploited, I wanted no part of it.

I blame the major boxing bodies like the World Boxing Council, the World Boxing Association and the International Boxing Federation for approving not only gross mismatches but for also creating their own champions.

How is it possible? Unless a promoter or manager has the right connections, he will have a hard time getting recognition for his boxer.

***

I write this piece to clear the air and by giving the floor to Games and Amusements Board chair Eric Buhain, who recently signed the accreditation papers of the National Dance Teachers Council (NDTC) and the Professional Dance Teachers Association of the Philippines (PDTA).

Responding to the letter of lawyer Ma. Cecilia Katigbak, chair of the PDTA, Buhain said:

"However, its (NDTC) accreditation does not extend to imposing disciplinary action to other dance sport associations except to its own members and personnel since the power of regulation and supervision of professional dancesport is exercised by the Games and Amusements Board (GAB).

"Moreover, pursuant to GAB Resolution No. 07-14, Series of 2007, the Board revised its original resolution and removed the 'exclusivity' provision on the accreditation of the said dance sport association after it discovered the non-unification of dancesport associations in the country."

Also in reply to the letter of Ma. Rebecca Garcia, president of the Dance Sport Council of the Philippines, Buhain said:

"Insofar as your concern of some other dance organizations, rest assured that the GAB shall adopt stricter rules on accreditation and qualification of already accredited dance organizations as well as that of new applicants."

Garcia had requested the GAB to "investigate and to know the groups and the personalities behind these associations." She said there are foreigners who have teamed up with an expelled member of the DSCP for alleged malversation of funds amounting to more than P700,000.

Garcia added that the DSCP is recognized by the Philippine Olympic Committee as the ruling body for dancesport in the country while the PDTA is the authorized training arm of the DSCP.

SPORTSWATCH

World No. 1 Czech to defend Asian triathlon title in Subic

DEFENDING CHAMPION AND LAST YEAR'S world No. 1 long-distance triathlete Petr Vabrousek of the Czech Republic will be back to ward off challengers in the 2nd Asian 02 Long Distance Triathlon which unfolds Aug. 4 at the Subic Bay Freeport.

Among the foreign entries who will try to unseat Vabrousek are Bevan Leach of Australia, Singapore's Alex Liuaw and Hong Kong's Hsieh Chun Shing and Andrew Patrick.

The local challenge will be headed by former national triathlon champion and now national duathlon head coach Mark Candelaria, Alaska basketball team owner Fred Uytengsu, ADB's Rune Stroem, up-and-coming Omar Parades and Japanese expatriate Hiroshi Takei.

Nona Torres, Christine Navarro and Chari May Onyangco are among the lady participants who will attempt to wrest the crown from last year's champion Popo Nagtalon-Remigio.

Sen. Pia Cayetano and Thailand Southeast Asian Games-bound Sandra Araullo are also entered in the sprint and the relay events.

The Asian 02 race features a 3K-open water swim, followed by an 80K-bike race over winding roads and a 20K-run.

"Our objective in holding regular events is to promote the fast-growing sport of triathlon and encourage everyone to get into it," said Triathlon Association of the Philippines (TRAP) president Tom Carrasco Jr.

Shell Active chess fires off in Batangas City Aug. 4-5

THE SHELL NATIONAL YOUTH ACTIVE CHESS Championship heads south on Aug. 4 and 5 with the staging of the fourth leg at SM City-Batangas in Batangas City.

The halfway leg of the eight-stage tournament, the Batangas phase expects about 500 participants in the 14-and-under and 20-and-under age brackets.

The top three players in both divisions will gain slots to the national finals where they will join the top finishers of the other legs in a nine-round Swiss system tournament at SM Megamall in October.

Registration for the Southern Luzon leg is ongoing with a fee of P50. For details, contact Alex Dinoy at 0922-8288510 or (02) 744-1664 or Joselito Castro at (043) 723-2568 or (043) 723-4246.

The tournament will also hand special citations to other top finishers.

RGFFP joins club centennial

THE 21ST RGFFP SOUTHERN LEG GOLF tournament has been scheduled for Aug. 22-26 at the Iloilo Golf & Country Club, the oldest golf course in the country.

The tournament will be co-hosted by the Rotary Club of Iloilo City headed by its president Lendry Certeza and PDG Oscar Oscar Nava as part of the club's centennial celebrations.

Players will get two chances to win the P1-million hole-in-one prize in one of the par-3 holes. Other raffle prizes will be given away during the awards dinner on Aug. 25.

For inquiries, call the RGFFP secretariat at 0920-9199000 or 724-8174, fax 721-5040 or email rgffp.inc@gmail.com, rgffp1987@yahoo.com.

Tatap-Makati tablenet set

HUNDREDS OF PLAYERS ARE EXPECTED TO vie in the first Tatap-Makati National Age Group Table Tennis Championship on Aug. 4 and 5 at the Coliseum ng Bayan Covered Court in Makati City.

The competition is organized by the Table Tennis Association of the Philippines (Tatap) in cooperation with the Makati city government headed by Mayor Jejomar Binay.

To be disputed are the championships in the boys' and girls' 10 years and under, 12-and-under, 14-and-under and 17-and-under divisions.

Tatap president Victor Valbuena said they intend to identify young players who have the potential to play for the national team. For inquiries, call Tatap at 522-1885 or 484-0777.

'Taglugon' derby starts today

MORE THAN 90 FIGHTS ARE LINED UP IN the 2-cock elimination round 2007 "Pahabol Sa Taglugon" 5-cock derby starting at 2 p.m. today at the Roligon Mega Cockpit with Lakpue Drug Inc. and Thunderbird Enertone as sponsors.

Ati Asuncion, the fastest-win champion in the recent "Hatawan" cockfest at the same venue, heads a big group of derby regulars that include Toti Manalo, Roy de Veyra, Eric Dio, Manny Ortiz, Rep. Gerry "Boy" Espinosa, James Uy, Obet Son, Mario Turbella, Mark Teves, Benny Lado, Bobby Doromal.

Participants who intend to field straight five cocks on Thursday must inform the Roligon office today, said host Rolly Ligon.

Meanwhile, the annual Stag Festival 5-stag derby unwraps on Sept. 6, 8 and 10.

RACING

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Master Professor (7), Silver Eagle (4), Naman Naman (5), All Class (2)
Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—Shifty (3), Reklamador (2), Alitaptap (6), Long Hitter (5)
Race 3—(Qrt/Tri)—Speed Admiral (5), Bloodline (4), Ocean Cookie (1), King Aljhun
Race 4—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Isla Clipper (8), Common Goal (3), Coat of Arms (9), Bom's Treasure (70, Princess Adarna (1), Prospector's Cat/Kimagure (5)
Race 5—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Refreshing (2), Selectee (8), Hurry Princess (3), Alam Mo Na-Yan (5), Sovereign Dancer (1)
Race 6—(Pent/Qrt/Tri)—GI Speedball (5), Sambat (7), Golden Rice (2), Fire Lady (4), T-Mac (8)
Race 7—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Gun Powder (1), American Inggo (4), Do It David (7), Gold and Diamond (9), Dazzling Affair (6)
Race 8—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Pay To See (3), EJ Forever (1), Man Power (9), Best Kept Secret (6), Manila Magic (3), Strong Boy (12)

Government Warning: Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health.

SPORTS

Iraq erupts in joy following superb Asian Cup victory

IRAQI policemen celebrate the victory of their country's football team against Saudi Arabia for the Asian Cup title. AFP

BAGHDAD—IRAQ ERUPTED IN joy and celebratory gunfire on Sunday when the country's national football squad won the Asian Cup and united its bitterly divided communities in a rare moment of celebration.

Thousands of Iraqis, including members of the security forces, defied a strict government ceasefire order to welcome the team's 1-0 victory over local rivals Saudi Arabia with an intense barrage of gunfire.

Soldiers, police and civilian gunmen loosed off long volleys of automatic fire skywards and into the waters of the Tigris within seconds of the final whistle in Jakarta, beamed live to cafes and homes across the country.

The Iraqi victory against the three-time Asian Cup champions was a precious moment of shared national joy in a country beset by civil strife.

"Now it is our right to enjoy this victory that our heroic team has brought to us. They have brought us joy that we never experienced in the past, when we suffered greatly," said Haidar Mustafa, a Baghdad student.

Around him in a downtown coffee shop, dozens of fans leapt and sang with joy after seeing skipper Younis Mahmoud's powerful header seal a first Asian Cup victory for his mixed team of Sunni Arabs, Shiite Arabs and Kurds.

From the southern Shiite port city of Basra, to executed Sunni dictator Saddam Hussein's northern hometown of Tikrit and even to Arbil, the capital of the autonomous Kurdish region, flag-waving crowds celebrated.

Earlier, Baghdad security authorities had imposed an overnight vehicle curfew in order to prevent insurgent car bomb attacks and ordered police to arrest anyone who took part in the traditional celebratory gunfire.

In the hours leading up to the match there were reports that two foreign Arab fighters had been apprehended while trying to move car bombs into Baghdad's Zayuna district, which has been targeted by Sunni extremists.

Zayuna was struck by one of two car bombs that went off following last week's semi-final victory against South Korea, shattering the celebrations and killing at least 50 people.

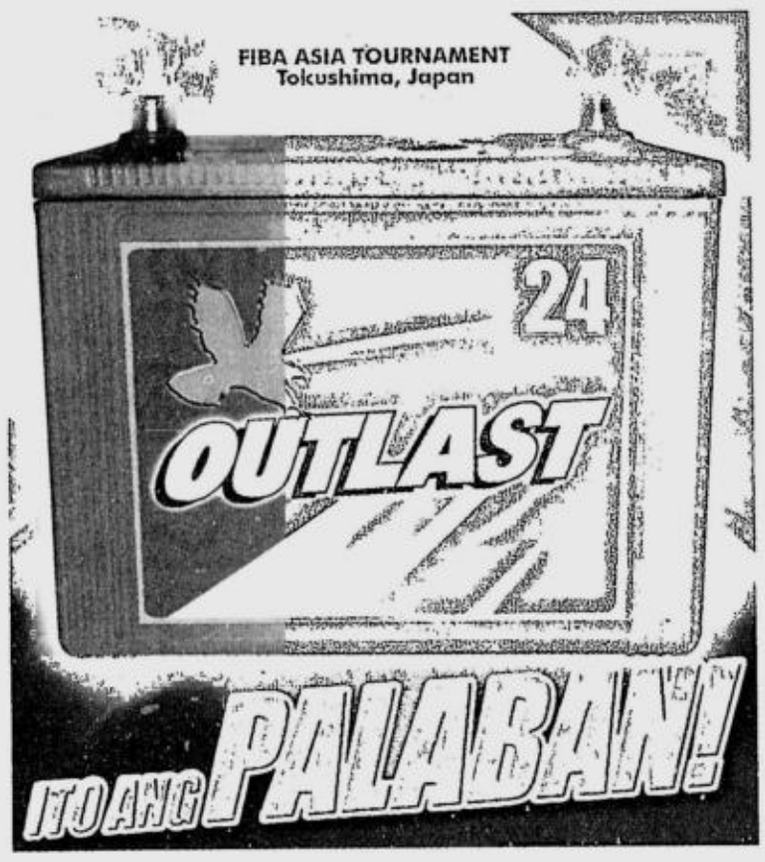
A senior interior ministry official strongly advised Iraqis to hold their celebratory fire and to stay in their own areas of the city.

Nevertheless, troops and cops were among the first to start pumping out rounds from their AK-47 assault rifles and Glock pistols at checkpoints and barracks in the war-torn capital.

Elsewhere in the city large crowds gathered in the streets waving flags, dancing and—in Shiite neighbourhoods—bearing aloft large banners with pictures of revered saints.

Iraqis traditionally celebrate sporting victories by firing guns into the air, a practice grown more lethal in recent years as arms have proliferated across the war-torn country.

People nevertheless welcomed the victory from their heroic team, one that would—at least temporarily—unite their divided country in jubilation. *AFP*



Contador looks ahead to more Tour victories

CONTADOR

PARIS—SPANIARD ALBERto Contador now has two things in common with Lance Armstrong, but the exploit of winning the Tour de France's yellow jersey is what he wants to remember most.

Contador secured his first overall victory in the race after Sunday's 20th and final stage to Paris, which he finished with a 23-second lead on Australian Cadel Evans.

Only three years ago, the Discovery Channel rider was not even considered a contender for his local criterium race in Madrid following what turned out to be a providential accident.

A crash in the Tour of Asturias stage race in 2004 saw Contador end up in hospital, where doctors detected an impending brain hemorrhage. After a life-saving operation, he returned to training six months later and soon began fulfilling the promise first shown by his under-23 national time trial crown, when he was still only 19 years old.

Having battled cancer to come back and win the race seven years in a row, Armstrong would empathize with the trials Contador endured.

But while the Spaniard admitted the story of Armstrong's long fightback from illness proved an inspiration, he is keen to write his own chapter in history.

"Lance was a role model for me. I read his book in the hospital when I was recovering," said Contador on Saturday after his fifth place finish in the race against the clock which virtually secured his overall victory on Sunday.

"(But) the only thing we have in common is a victory on the Tour de France, although he's got seven and I only have one so far."

Contador looks to have many good years ahead, but the Spaniard, having looked death in the face, wants to take it one year at a time. "A lot of riders have won the Tour without coming so close to death," he said. "It's not the right time for me to look so far into the future." *AFP*

Hole-in-one helps Furyk keep crown

TORONTO—JIM FURYK, BUOYED BY A hole-in-one, fired a seven-under 64 here Sunday to retain his Canadian Open crown.

Furyk played his first 10 holes in 5-under-par and finished with a 16-under total of 268 and a one-stroke victory over Vijay Singh in the five million-dollar tournament.

Singh, the overnight leader, had a chance to force a playoff with a 20-footer for birdie at 18 but it broke under the hole, leaving Singh to settle for par. He carded a 68 for 269.

Furyk posted his first victory of the season and first since he won this title last year.

Singh won the Canadian Open in 2004 when he edged local favorite Mike Weir in a playoff.

Birdies at the first and third got Furyk going in the right direction and his ace at the par-three fourth pushed him into the lead. He added a birdie at 10 to get to 14-under.

"Well, it was a dream start really, to get out—to start the day at three back, I have a lot of respect for Vijay and his game, and I expected him to fire a pretty good number today," Furyk said. "So to get off to a good jump I thought was key." Singh, who entered the final round with a one-shot lead, was at 11-under after eight pars and a bogey on the front nine.

Both Furyk and Singh started the back nine with three consecutive birdies. Furyk was eight-under for his round after a birdie at the 15th but he opened the door for Singh with a bogey on 18.

Furykearned 900,000 dollars for his 13th PGA Tour title. *AFP*

NATALIE GULBIS: Extra-hole birdie REUTERS

Gulbis bags maiden title

EVIAN-LES-BAINS, FRANCE—NATALIE GULbis won the Evian Masters with a birdie on the first hole of a sudden-death playoff with Jang Jeong of South Korea on Sunday.

It was the first LPGA Tour victory for the 24-year-old American.

Gulbis and Jang had finished the fourth round tied at 4-under 284. Gulbis, who won $450,000, had a final round 70, and Jang birdied the last hole to finish with a 72.

Top-ranked Lorena Ochoa was one shot behind and tied for third place with Juli Inkster of the United States and Shin Ji-yai of South Korea. Ochoa had six birdies in her closing 68, but dropped a shot at the last.

Inkster, the leader by two shots after the first three rounds, finished with a 75. Shin wound up with a 72. Michelle Wie finished tied for 69th place on 16-over 304, after a final round 76.

Bonds resumes record chase

SAN FRANCISCO—CONTROVERSIAL GIANTS slugger Barry Bonds will take his chase for baseball history into hostile territory this week after failing to break Hank Aaron's all-time home run record at home.

Bonds remained stuck at 754 career home runs, one shy of tying and two homers short of breaking Aaron's 31-year-old major league record of 755.

He belted No. 754 on Friday night against Florida, but couldn't manage another in two more home games against the Marlins on Saturday and Sunday.

On Sunday, Bonds went 1-for-4 with an infield single, two groundouts and a flyout as Florida pitchers continued to challenge him.

On Saturday, Bonds was 0-for-3 with a walk.

After a day off, Bonds will try his luck against Mark Hendrickson and the Los Angeles Dodgers on Tuesday. For his career, Bonds is 2-for-8 against Hendrickson with no home runs.

Bonds said Friday he was glad he was able to homer in front of Giants fans, who have supported him despite the cloud of doping allegations that have made him the target of jeers elsewhere across the country. *AFP*

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IMF chief hails RP fiscal progress

Says gov't needs to do more to preserve gains

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE PHILIPPINES HAS become a role model for other countries facing their own fiscal problems after it successfully implemented tough tax reform measures, the head of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said on Monday.

In an exclusive interview with the INQUIRER, IMF Managing Director Rodrigo de Rato also heaped praise on the country's economic strength as evidenced by the strong interest of foreign investors in the recent stages of the government's privatization program.

"I would point to the strong foreign interest in recent successful sales of government assets as evidence of the remarkable turnaround in the Philippine economy over the last few years," he said of his views about the local situation. "For this, policy makers can take considerable credit."

De Rato described the unpopular in-

IMF CHIEF/ B4

Neda Board OKs ₱51.6B in infra projects

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT Authority (Neda) has approved the implementation of P51.6 billion worth of projects for the development of the country's infrastructure and the agriculture sector.

The approvals bolstered the Arroyo administration's promise to boost economic growth through the implementation of various infrastructure projects.

In a statement, the Neda said its board approved the Bicol power restoration project worth P872.32 million, the Concepcion-Clark 230-kilovolt transmission line (P2.12 billion), the Luzon Substation expansion (P2.12 billion) and the Aurora-Polanco 138-kV transmission project (P1.62 billion), all to be implemented by the state-owned National Transmission Corp. (Transco).

Other projects approved were the Quirino highway project (P1.62 billion), the Spanish-Assisted bridge construction/replacement project (P3.19 billion), the Austrian-Assisted bridge acceleration project for calamity areas (P1.61 billion), the national roads improvement and management program (P27.43 billion);

Reappraisal of the second phase of the Angat water and aqueduct improvement project (P5.75 billion) by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, the Provincial Towns Water Supply Program III (P1.26 billion) by the Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA), Strengthening the Implementa-

NEDA/ B3

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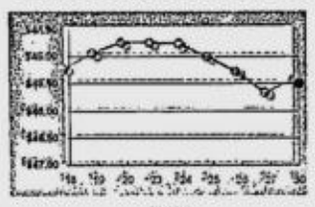

JULY
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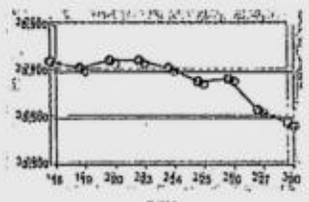
As of 5 p.m., July30, 2007

STOCK MARKET



JULY
(See stock market report on Page B2)

Stocks fall another 1.5%

SHARE PRICES LOST 1.5 PERCENT YESTERday, hitting their lowest close in two months after nervous investors cut their positions following another steep fall on Wall Street, dealers said.

However, the initial public offering of broadcaster GMA Network Inc. helped provide some support as it generated strong interest, mainly from foreign investors.

The composite index fell 51.30 points at 3,467.46 after trading between 3,518.76 and 3,434.66 points. This was the weakest close since May 30, when it settled at 3,398.55.

Declines led gains 101 to 25, with 44 stocks were unchanged.

Volume was 4.4 billion shares worth P16.9 billion.

"We are beginning to see the start of a technical rebound after two days of sell-offs in the US. We consider this two-day slump as a buying opportunity," said Jose Vistan of AB Capital Securities.

"With the listing of GMA, which followed the resumption of trading in Vista Land last week, more liquidity has been freed up to help the market recover," remarked Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities. ***(See related story on page B2.)***

Shares in ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp, GMA's main rival, shed P1.50 to P34.50.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., the biggest company by market value, fell P30 to P2,595.

Meralco's A-shares, which are reserved for Filipinos, jumped P6 to P101. It's B-shares, which anyone can buy, advanced P7 to P102.

AFP

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Wall Street: The prime concern

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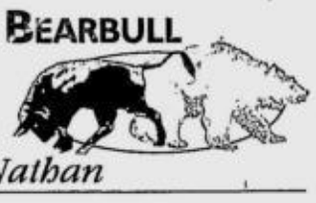

Ron Nathan

I HAVE RECEIVED MANY E-MAILS thanking me for pointing out the serious situation posed by the subprime mortgages and even the prime mortgages last week. As a result, many readers liquidated or at least reduced their equity holdings before the market crashed. It proves beyond doubt that if you want to invest in the stock market, you must know what is going on, not merely in the Philippines, but all over the world. Regrettably, I am the only columnist at present who covers all markets, commodities, bonds and currencies in my weekly article and daily newsletter.

. Wall Street has suffered a severe shakeout (519 points fall in the DOW in two days) and there has been a major loss of confidence among investors, especially when they heard that house sales had fallen 6.6 percent last month and are now 22.3 percent below the level of a year-ago. Add to this, falling house prices and a lack of prospective buyers and you have the worst downturn in 16 years.

The weakness reflects increasing fears, as more borrowers will be forced to sell their homes at any price they can get because they cannot pay their first and second mortgages. In addition, banks and mortgage brokers are now tightening their standards, making it harder for prospective buyers to qualify for loans. So we have a housing market that will act as a drag on the economy, possibly for years. Certainly, nobody sees the situation improving in the foreseeable future.

All this stems from greed, a human frailty. When a person buys a home for $500,000 with a $400,000 mortgage, he is pretty certain he can handle the payments, particularly as many property companies offer exceptionally favorable terms for the first year or two. After a few years, the buyer is ecstatic to discover that his home has doubled in value to $1 million so he goes to a broker who will grant him a second mortgage, say for $300,000 but at a higher interest rate and in the meantime, the rate on his first mortgage has risen substantially.

Unfortunately, he used the extra money to buy his wife or kids a new car and has probably upgraded his own for a more expensive gas-guzzling model. With mortgage rates up 0.5 percentage point in the last six months and rising even faster, he is under severe pressure to meet the repayments. His wife has given birth to another child and school fees have risen sharply, especially at university level. His petrol bill has quadrupled as he has two cars and petrol prices have doubled.

By this time, he is desperate and with house prices declining, if he sells his house and pays off his mortgages, he will be left with absolutely nothing. So he sells his mutual funds ($5.5 billion were sold last week in a single day). That buys him some time but as the situation continues to deteriorate, he has to sell his stocks, cash in his insurance policies and maybe opt out of his pension plan. This story is happening to many people in the US today and a million are likely to lose their homes this year and next year. The poor wretch is guilty of wanting to improve his lifestyle (nothing wrong with that) but he was ignorant of the financial pitfalls. The real culprits are the unscrupulous lenders who allowed him to get into debt so that they could earn extra commission.

Fortunately, not all the news is bad and I do not foresee the US economy or stock market disintegrating. The second quarter GDP growth rose to 3.4 percent from 0.7 percent in the first quarter and over the year, it should average between 2.5 and 3 percent, which is fine. Company earnings are still rising, year on year, and the P/E ratio on the S&P500 is a very reasonable 15.3. Demand for durable goods increased, distorted by heavy demand for Boeings, now benefiting from the problems of Airbus. Core inflation, which excludes food and energy, declined to an acceptable level for those who do not eat or drive. Hedge funds are expected to lose $100-$125 billion.

The main impact on the Wall Street will be a contraction in the number of mergers and acquisitions, which led the DOW to a high of 14,000. A number of IPOs will be canceled or deferred and the banks and brokerage firms will suffer the most. Volatility will remain high, exacerbated by the hedge funds selling short.

Although Asia is a much safer place to be, Indonesia and the Philippines remain vulnerable to foreign selling, especially after the Fitch Ratings report, which stated that the government would not achieve its P63-billion budget deficit. It predicted a deficit of P125 billion less whatever the government could raise from privatizing MER, SMC, PNOC assets, PNB and PCOR.

The President has been furiously shuffling her Cabinet so that I no longer remember who is in charge of what. My mind is obviously deteriorating because while watching GMA in the sauna, I don't remember hearing about rolling blackouts and water shortages, only about a 6.8-percent growth rate for 2007. Imports fell for a second month in May as manufacturers bought fewer electronics to reassemble for exports so they too will eventually decline. We will have to see if Ms Hefti can increase the BIR take, which accounts for 70 percent of the government's revenue. Only Costa Rica, Mexico and Guatemala have revenue/GDP ratios lower than the Philippines'. If Fitch turns out to be correct in their somber prediction, we will be liable to a downgrade.

Only China appears to be unaffected and in four days last week, the CSI 300 index rose 12 percent. China's second quarter GDP growth accelerated to 11.9 percent, India to 9 percent and Russia to 7 percent. These three countries should be able to take up any slack as they account for half the world's population and in the first-world countries, Europe, UK, US and Japan are expected to grow by at least 2 percent. The IMF has increased its estimate of global growth for 2007 and 2008.

Because of the increased volatility, my successful buy-and-hold strategy will change into a short-term buy-and-sell mode, concentrated on the leaders but not until the foreign brokers have stopped or nearly stopped selling our stocks. Although the risk factor is negligible, YOU NEVER TRADE AGAINST THE TREND. So don't try bottom fishing, wait for signs of stability.

I have omitted the jokes this week because of investors' concerns about the market.

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DMCI plans to hold IPO in 2008

DMCI HOMES, THE real estate arm of the Consunji family may go public next year, DMCI chief finance officer Herbert Consunji said.

Consunji said the market capital of DMCI Homes was placed at about P10 billion to P15 billion.

He said 30 percent of the company's total shares might be sold to the public.

DMCI Homes expects to post P7.5 billion in reservation sales this year, much higher than year-ago's P4.23 billion, DMCI president Isidro Consunji said.

Consunji said around 30 percent of sales were accounted for by overseas workers. The increase in reservation sales came from the following projects: Alta Vista Boracay (mostly from foreigners), Tivoli Garden Residences (Mandaluyong) and Cypress Towers (Taguig).

Alta Vista de Boracay is a condominium-hotel leisure community. Studio and loft units will be sold for P3.9 million to P4.9 million each.

Tivoli Gardens will be composed of six towers with about 24 to 28 residential levels to be sold between P2.7 billion and P4.6 million.

Another high-rise condominium project is Cypress Towers, a joint venture with Crown Equities Inc. in Taguig. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

SEC COMMISSIONER Ma. Juanita Eliger-Cueto, SEC chair Fe Barin, PSE chair Jose Vitug, GMA chief Felipe Gozon and PSE president Francis Lim ring the bell to mark the listing of the network's shares. RODEL ROTONI

GMA 7 bucks market trend, share price rises by 23.5%

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

GMA NETWORK INC. hit the box office during its maiden debut at the stock market yesterday, its shares closing 23.5 percent higher at P10.50 compared with the offer price of P8.50.

GMA Network and GMA Holdings, which issued Philippine Deposit Receipts (PDRs), bucked the stock market's overall weakness and accounted for more than 15 percent of the market's total trades yesterday.

GMA Network, trading under the symbol, "GMA 7" opened at P8.70 and was the stock market's fourth most traded stock with P562 million worth of trades.

GMA Holdings PDRs closed at P11, up 29.4 percent from a similar offer price of P8.50. It was the top traded stock yesterday with more than P2 billion worth of trades. The PDRs are open to foreign investors.

GMA Network's strong showing yesterday was traced to heavy foreign demand, which local underwriter ATR Kim Eng Capital said amounted to $3.5 billion during the company's international roadshow prior to the listing.

"In (the foreign roadshow), we were 29 times oversubscribed while here, local demand (from PSE) was 7.3 times oversubscribed," GMA Network chair Felipe Gozon told reporters yesterday.

CURRENCIES

July 30, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.723537	1.000000	44.7880
Japan	Yen	0.006021	0.008321	0.3727
United Kingdom	Pound	1.492150	2.062300	92.3663
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.092501	0.127846	5.7260
Switzerland	Franc	0.601394	0.831186	37.2272
Canada	Dollar	0.698394	0.965251	43.2317
Singapore	Dollar	0.480564	0.664187	29.7476
Australia	Dollar	0.639562	0.883939	39.5899
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.919399	2.652801	118.8137
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.192932	0.266652	11.9428
Brunei	Dollar	0.478973	0.661989	29.6492
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000080	0.000111	0.0050
Thailand	Baht	0.024427	0.033761	1.5121
UAE	Dirham	0.197015	0.272294	12.1955
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.382100	61.9015
Korea	Won	0.000792	0.001094	0.0490
China	Yuan**	0.095674	0.132231	5.9224
Argentina	Peso	0.230867	0.319081	14.2910
Brazil	Real	0.391524	0.541126	24.2360
Denmark	Kroner	0.134427	0.185791	8.3212
India	Rupee	0.018021	0.024907	1.1155
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.212805	0.294118	13.1730
Mexico	New Peso	0.066779	0.092295	4.1337
New Zealand	Dollar	0.585623	0.809389	36.2509
Pakistan	Rupee	0.011979	0.016556	0.7415
South Africa	Rand	0.106031	0.146546	6.5635
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022086	0.030525	1.3672

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—July 27, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian time closing rate as of July 27, 2007

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of July 30, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5.4	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	10.25	10.25	9.8	10	130,000
73	30.5	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	65	65.5	63	65	1,877,700
73.5	51	Bank of the Philippine Islands	66	67	66	66.5	2,178,200
935	630	China Banking Corp.	850	850	845	845	1,420
20.25	18.18	Citystate Savings Bank	20.25	20.25	20.25	20.25	300
0.63	0.37	Export and Industry Bank, Inc'	0.5	0.5	0.49	0.5	4,650,000
75.5	35.5	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	58.5	61.5	58	60.5	7,248,000
68	39	Philippine Savings Bank	64	64	64	64	1,000
39.57	14.13	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	31.5	31.5	29.5	29.5	8,241,400
90	46.5	Security Bank Corp.	80.5	80.5	80.5	80.5	17,400
66	41.54	Union Bank of the Philippines	61	61	59.5	59.5	23,100
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
5.6	1.72	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	4.15	4.15	4.15	4.15	1,000
1.5	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.16	1.24	1.16	1.22	1,651,000
16.25	1.78	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	12	12	11.5	11.75	2,176,100
8.8	3.9	Filipino Fund Inc.	8.6	8.6	8.6	8.6	2,000
1.6	0.4	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	10,000
42	28	First Metro Investment Corp.	41.5	41.5	41.5	41.5	5,000
5	3.95	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	4.05	4.1	3.95	4	10,351,000
3.1	0.99	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	2.4	2.4	2.36	2.36	90,000
1,005.00	212	The Philippine Stock Exchange, Inc	800	800	795	800	5,660
2,250.00	1,895.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,100.00	2,100.00	2,100.00	2,100.00	750
1.94	1.28	Vantage Corp	1.74	1.74	1.7	1.7	447,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	5.1	Aboitiz Power Corp.	5.3	5.3	5.1	5.1	48,217,000
70	41.5	First Gen Corp.	63	63	61.5	62.5	1,171,400
92	41	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	82.5	85	81.5	84.5	323,800
15	8	Manila Water Co. Inc.	14	14.25	13.75	14	5,115,900
116	15.25	Manila Electric Co. "A"	95	101	95	101	391,400
118	24	Manila Electric Co. "B"	95	103	94.5	102	2,032,800
7	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.4	6.5	6.3	6.3	33,819,000
6.5	3.75	Petron Corp.	5.8	6	5.7	6	6,487,000
14.75	10.75	Phoenix Petroleum Phillippines Inc.	11.25	11.5	11	11	581,900
2.5	1.6	Salcon Power Corp.	2.18	2.18	2.18	2.18	30,000
1.9	0.92	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.36	1.38	1.32	1.32	1,735,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	2.9	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.6	743,000
2.95	1.88	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	2.24	2.24	2.16	2.16	160,000
2.7	1.24	CADP Group Corp.	2.06	2.06	2.06	2.06	6,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	24	24	24	24	4,000
61	31.5	Jollibee Foods Corp.	46	48.5	46	48	363,700
7.3	4.6	Pancake House Inc.	6.7	6.7	6.5	6.5	3,654,000
1.96	0.77	RFM Corp.	1.82	1.82	1.8	1.8	853,000
4.05	2.2	Roxas Holdings	2.44	2.44	2.44	2.44	10,000
80	61	San Miguel Corp. "A"	71.5	73	71	72	140,400
88	69.5	San Miguel Corp. "B"	73.5	73.5	72	72.5	529,500
0.66	0.2	Swift Foods Inc.	0.54	0.55	0.51	0.54	1,040,000
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp.	16.75	16.75	16	16.25	1,327,600
0.55	0.2	Vitarich Corp.	0.38	0.39	0.38	0.38	140,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	1.55	EEI Corp.	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.8	100,000
21.5	6	Federal Chemicals Inc.	19	19	15	16	4,200
9.2	4.3	Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.3	7.5	7.2	7.4	16,494,000
7	1.28	Republic Cement Corp.	4.85	4.85	4.85	4.85	75,000
2	0.27	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.5	1,208,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	1.42	Chemirez Technologies Inc.	5.1	5.1	5	5.1	1,097,000
1.4	0.61	Interphil Laboratories Inc. "B"	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	20,000
1.46	0.51	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	167,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.07	Pump Resources Inc.	0.5	0.51	0.47	0.51	28,330,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	1.8	A. Soriano Corp	3.5	3.65	3.5	3.55	458,000
0.17	0.025	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.115	0.12	53,670,000
1.28	0.21	APC Group Inc.	0.97	0.97	0.94	0.97	16,320,000
3.6	1.4	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	2.48	2.48	2.48	2.48	20,000
3.3	1.48	ATN Holdings Inc. "B"	2.65	2.65	2.55	2.6	28,000
0.018	0.007	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "A"	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.012	174,600,000
0.019	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "B"	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	44,000,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	7.3	7.3	7	7.3	5,006,000
0.021	0.0075	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.017	0.017	0.016	0.017	51,500,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.6	5.7	14,006,000
1.38	0.49	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	290,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.38	2.38	2.32	2.34	4,285,000
8	0.8	Aries Prime Resources Inc.	4	4	4	4	5,000
590	339.58	Ayala Corp.	520	525	510	515	376,780
14.5	6.96	Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc.	13.25	13.25	13.25	13.25	34,300
6.9	0.92	Balabac Resources and Holdings Co. Inc.	5.1	5.2	4.8	5.1	342,000
5.8	1.06	Benpres Holdings Corp.	4.9	4.95	4.8	4.95	6,202,000
10.25	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	9.1	9.1	8.9	9	1,208,000
2.5	0.7	F and J Prince Holdings Corp. "A"	1.84	1.84	1.8	1.8	130,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	6.7	7	6.7	7	540,000
3.55	1.16	House of Investments Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	50,000
14.5	5.6	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	10.5	10.5	10	10	1,384,500
5.9	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	3	3	2.5	2.6	15,000
0.95	0.13	Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	90,000
11.5	0.26	Multitech Investments Corp.	8.2	8.6	8.1	8.2	3,752,000
8.2	2.65	PAL Holdings Inc.	7.1	7.3	7	7.3	695,000
0.75	0.17	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	320,000
2.1	1.2	Republic Glass Holdings Corp.	2.02	2.1	2.02	2.02	150,000
452.5	202.36	SM Investments Corp.	405	410	402.5	410	261,000
0.73	0.115	Sinophil Corp.	0.45	0.45	0.4	0.44	15,270,000
1.06	0.51	Solid Group Inc.	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	210,000
6.6	1	TKC Steel Corp.	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	23,000
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc	0.48	0.5	0.43	0.5	6,850,000
1.1	0.155	Zeus Holdings Inc	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	100,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	0.78	A Brown Co. Inc.	1.52	1.54	1.42	1.42	1,973,000
1.06	0.32	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.74	10,000
19.25	10.83	Ayala Land Inc.	16.5	16.5	15	16.25	19,317,100
1.88	0.99	Belle Corp.	1.42	1.42	1.4	1.42	5,336,000
4.7	2.1	Cebu Holdings Inc.	4.05	4.35	4.05	4.35	118,000
0.86	0.29	Crown Equities Inc.	0.72	0.74	0.71	0.74	1,500,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.54	0.56	0.53	0.56	8,100,000
0.99	0.45	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.77	0.82	0.77	0.82	15,870,000
0.47	0.038	Ever Gotesco Resources and Hold'gs Inc.	0.28	0.3	0.28	0.3	22,840,000
1.48	0.39	Fil-Estate Land Inc	1.22	1.34	1.16	1.34	31,187,000
2.44	1.06	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.92	1.94	1.82	1.92	43,467,000
0.49	0.07	Gotesco Land Inc. "A"	0.33	0.35	0.33	0.35	1,630,000
0.5	0.08	Gotesco Land Inc. "B"	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.34	110,000
1.12	0.22	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.8	0.81	240,000
4.4	1.36	Megaworld Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.65	3.7	72,207,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.05	4.05	4	4	125,000
0.7	0.125	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.46	0.46	390,000
0.87	0.3	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.63	0.63	0.62	0.62	5,270,000
9.2	1.1	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	5.4	5.4	5.2	5.2	20,000
23	11.25	Robinson Land Corp.	17	17.5	16.75	17.5	3,690,000
5.9	1.32	SM Development Corp.	5.3	5.3	5.1	5.3	1,163,000
13.5	6.08	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	12	12	11.25	11.5	18,680,300
1.34	0.55	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.82	0.93	0.82	0.91	210,000
0.49	0.07	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.3	0.34	0.3	0.33	13,660,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc	6.5	6.5	6.1	6.2	191,567,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	15.75	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	34	34.5	33	34.5	55,900
10.5	8.7	GMA Network Inc	8.7	10.5	8.7	10.5	57,372,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.16	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.36	1.38	2,136,000
1,445.00	970	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,305.00	1,305.00	1,265.00	1,265.00	57,360
2,820.00	1,890.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,625.00	2,625.00	2,585.00	2,595.00	109,730
7.9	3.55	Pilipino Telephone Corp	7	7.1	6.8	7.1	2,341,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	6,420,000
12	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	10	10.25	9.9	10.25	207,000
11.5	2	IPVG Corp.	10	10	9.7	9.8	3,853,200
0.065	0.0286	ISM Communications Corp.	0.042	0.044	0.042	0.044	14,800,000
29.5	6	Imperial Resources Inc. "A"	20	20	20	20	3,000
2.9	1.8	Ionics Inc.	2.06	2.06	2	2.06	140,000
0.32	0.043	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.2	0.21	0.2	0.21	34,100,000
0.0725	0.027	PhilWeb Com Inc	0.0525	0.0525	0.05	0.0525	183,300,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l Inc.	2.3	2.48	2.3	2.48	812,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
6.8	2.7	Asian Terminals Inc.	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.8	44,000
34.5	14	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	31	31	30	30	2,693,700
2.16	0.87	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	430,000
2.04	0.8	Lorenzo Shipping Corp	1.32	1.32	1.26	1.26	83,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.28	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.55	890,000
0.98	0.22	Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc.	0.68	0.71	0.58	0.63	2,490,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	20,000
		EDUCATION					
966.67	650	Far Eastern University Inc.	860	860	860	860	10
3.7	2.65	iPeople Inc	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	494,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
41	6.6	JTH Davies Holdings Inc.	22	22	22	22	500
6	1.9	Macroasia Corp.	5	5.1	4.9	5.1	872,000
17.25	12.75	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	13.25	13.25	12.75	12.75	187,700
30	9.9	Parys Inc	19	19	18.5	18.75	515,500
		MINING					
0.018	0.0075	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	360,500,000
7.6	3.65	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.2	598,000
7.7	3.65	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	25,000
21.25	7.6	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	15	15.5	15	15.5	5,541,100
14.25	8.7	Benguet Corp. "A"	10.75	11	10.75	11	59,200
5	1.8	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	3.95	3.95	3.95	3.95	10,000
3.1	0.26	GEOGRACE Resources Philippines Inc.	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.55	62,463,000
0.35	0.215	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	3,810,000
0.42	0.225	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	5,480,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.028	0.029	0.027	0.028	142,400,000
0.041	0.019	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.031	0.031	0.03	0.03	36,000,000
30	0.88	NiHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	20.5	21.75	20	20.5	576,600
0.021	0.0079	Omico Corp.	0.016	0.017	0.015	0.016	440,800,000
6.4	3.15	Philex Mining Corp.	5.5	5.7	5.4	5.7	9,462,000
43	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	34.5	34.5	34.5	34.5	6,000
1.36	0.39	United Paragon Mining Corp.	1.02	1.02	0.99	1.02	1,010,000
1.8	0.52	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp	1.34	1.34	1.3	1.32	3,926,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Petroleum Corp	0.45	0.45	0.44	0.45	8,700,000
0.025	0.0095	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "A"	0.022	0.023	0.022	0.023	182,500,000
0.027	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "B"	0.024	0.025	0.024	0.025	35,600,000
14.25	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10	10	9.9	10	65,000
0.028	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.024	0.024	0.023	0.023	660,900,000

AVERAGES			VOLUME	VALUE
Financial	928.52 DOWN	18.16	50,639,750	1,416,158,250.00
Industrial	4,821.97 UP	22.75	156,371,600	1,184,581,175.00
Holding Firms	2,034.13 DOWN	34.11	402,168,580	561,264,850.00
Property	1,659.37 DOWN	36.78	458,780,400	2,233,408,660.00
Service	1,561.35 DOWN	27.96	1,182,212,600	8,482,590,940.00
Mining & Oil	6,492.49 DOWN	88.1	1,960,431,900	360,936,585.00
All Shares Index	2,252.05 DOWN	31.18		
PSEI	3,467.46 DOWN	51.3		
		GRAND TOTALS	4,210,604,830	14,238,940,460.00

COMPILED BY SCHATZI QUODALA, INQUIRER RESEARCH SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK, PSE

Meralco says under-recoveries swelled to ₱22.8B

Amount related to system loss, transmission cost, lifeline subsidies

By Abigail L. Ho

WHILE STILL WAITING FOR PERmission from the Energy Regulatory Commission to recover P13.3 billion worth of generation-related charges incurred last May, Manila Electric Co. reported another P9.5 billion in under-recoveries, this time related to other aspects of its operation.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Meralco vice president Gil San Diego said the additional under-recoveries were related to transmission charges, system loss charges and inter-class and lifeline subsidies as of end-May.

He said that to gain relief from these under-recoveries, Meralco filed with the ERC last July 26 an urgent motion to lift the suspension in the "confirmation process of the relevant rules on the calculation of over/under-recovery in the implementation of the automatic generation rate adjustment (Agra), system loss rates, and inter-class and lifeline subsidies."

The suspension prohibited Meralco from automatically recovering such costs from its customers, resulting in accumulated under-recoveries.

San Diego said the suspension should be lifted, following the effectivity last June 26 of the amendment to Section 4e Rule 3 of the implementing rules and regulations of RA 9136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001.

The amendment allowed power firms to automatically recover generation- and foreign exchange-related costs, subject to the verification and monitoring of the ERC.

The ERC had likewise lifted last June 28 the suspension of the Agra last June 28.

In an interview, Meralco vice president and utility economics chief Ivanna dela Peña said the Epira IPP amendment and the lifting of the Agra suspension merely stopped the further accumulation of the distribution utility's under-recoveries, but did not facilitate the recovery of previously incurred pass-through costs.

"We have yet to recover the P13.3 billion, our previous under-recoveries. These have ballooned so much because true costs were not reflected and prices were very much suppressed," she said.

As for the actual impact on the rates, she said this would depend on how the ERC would allow Meralco to recover its under-recoveries, how long they would be given to recover and how much at a time.

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Thai oil firm puts up Cebu oil depot, plans 15 retail service stations

PTT PHILIPPINES CORP., THE LOCAL ARM of leading Thai oil firm PTT Public Co. Ltd., has put up a P100-million oil depot in Mactan, Cebu, paving the way for the company's establishment of 15 service stations in the Visayas province.

In a statement issued yesterday, PTT Philippines chair Artasith Pothianpinyanvisuth said the 5 million-liter fuel depot, which will store gasoline, diesel and fuel oil products, was only the first phase of the company's expansion into the Visayas region as it planned to put up 15 retail service stations in Cebu alone at a cost of P200 million.

PTT Philippines currently has 25 service stations, mostly located in Luzon. Over the next three to five years, the oil firm planned to increase this number to about 100.

Following the inauguration of the Cebu depot, Pothianpinyanvisuth said the company's Thai parent was already looking at setting up another fuel depot, this time closer to the National Capital Region, where most of the demand was.

This, he said, would allow the company to reduce its transport costs.

"As we speak today, PTT is already looking for another location in the areas of Luzon, Batangas and Manila Bay to put up modern fuel tanks and depot, with full automation and with the latest international standards in protection of the environment—probably the first in the Philippines," he said.

PTT currently leases oil terminals within the Subic Bay Freeport Zone in Zambales and the Clark Special Economic Zone in Pampanga.

Pothianpinyanvisuth said the company was likewise keen on going into more energy-related businesses in the country.

"We hope to enter into fresh ventures to increase our involvement in the crucial energy sector. This includes the continuous expansion of our retail network and additional fuel storage tanks and depots in other islands of the Philippines," he said.

He said the Thai firm's multibillion-peso programmed expansion over the next five years was a sign of its "renewed faith" in the Philippine investment environment and a response to the call for more investments by the Thai government in the country. *Abigail L. Ho*

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PHILFLEX, the leading wire and cable maker in the country, has been awarded the prestigious Superbrands status for 2007-2008. The award is an affirmation of PHILFLEX's commitment to quality and its high quality products. Superbrands is the world renowned independent arbiter of branding, who has presence in 55 countries worldwide, including the US, UK, Japan, Canada and Singapore etc. The winner selection criteria of Superbrands award are stringent. To qualify as a winner, a brand should make achievements in Market Dominance, Customer Loyalty, Longevity, Overall Market Acceptance and Goodwill. Photo shows Jaime Que, President, PHILFLEX (center) receiving the award from Karl Mclean,Chairman, Superbrands Marketing International (2nd from left) and Eamonn Sadler, CEO, Superbrands Ltd. (4th from left). Also in the photo are Harry Tambuatco, RPN9 (left) and Desmon Sia, Vice-President, PHILFLEX.

Neda Board...

From page B1

tion of Basic Education in the Visayas (P667.11 million) by the Department of Education;

The establishment of the Women's Medical Center and upgrading of the National Kidney and Transplant Institute (P2.78 billion), and the community-based forest and mangrove management project for Panay and Negros (P568.75 million) by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The Bicol power restoration project will be financed by a loan from the World Bank. The project is intended to permanently restore Transco's power transmission facilities in four Bicol provinces through the construction of new steel towers.

The Concepcion-Clark transmission line aims to provide the Clark Special Economic Zone (CESZ) with a safe and reliable power transmission highway. This is aimed at addressing frequent power interruptions and voltage fluctuations in the past and meet the growing power demand in the industrial zone.

The Luzon substation expansion will increase the operating capabilities of nine substations in Regions I, III and IV-A to ensure sufficient, stable and reliable delivery of power to load centers. The project will involve the installation of additional transformers and replacement of old ones.

The Aurora-Polanco transmission project, to be funded by a loan from the French government, is intended to provide delivery of electricity to consumers and help sustain the economic activity in concerned areas. The project will involve the installation of a 79-kilometer, 138-kV transmission line from the Aurora substation in Zamboanga del Sur to the proposed Polanco substation in Zamboanga del Norte. The project will also involve the installation of 11km, 69kV lines that will directly link load-end substations to the proposed 138kV Polanco substation.

The Quirino Highway project, which will traverse the provinces of Quezon, Camarines Norte and Camarines Sur, will be financed by the Korean Economic Development Cooperation Fund. It is expected to ease transportation going to and from any of the provinces.

The DPWH bridge construction/replacement project will involve the construction or rehabilitation of 96 bridges with a combined length of 3,665 lineal miles.

The bridge acceleration project for calamity areas, which will be financed by the Austrian government, will include the construction of 16 bridges in various region that were previously stricken by calamities.

The reappraisal of the Angat water and aqueduct, to be financed by a loan from the Chinese government, aims to optimize the quality of raw water delivered daily from the Angat Dam via the Ipo Dam-Bicti-La Mesa system to the water treatment plants.

The forest and mangrove project for Panay and Negros, to be funded by the German government, aims to contribute to the improved management of critical environment resources in the areas within the broader framework of addressing poverty. It involves rehabilitation and management of forest and mangroves and the improvement of livelihood options and rural infrastructure.

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RE-INVITATION TO BID

The Cebu Port Authority, North Reclamation Area, Cebu City, through its Disposal Committee, invites interested parties to bid on the sale of its equipment:

Items for Disposal: "AS IS," "WHERE IS" located at CIP Complex, S. Osmeña Blvd., North Reclamation Area, Cebu City, are:

- 1 unit – 35 Tonner Level Luffing Crane P 4,706,300.00
- 1 unit – 25 Tonner Level Luffing Crane P 4,496,610.00

The bid documents will be available starting August 2-9, 2007 and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of THREE THOUSAND PESOS (P3,000.00) through the Disposal Committee located at the ground floor of Cebu Port Authority Main Office.

A pre-bidding conference shall be held on August 17, 2007, 2:00 P.M., CPA Conference Room.

All bids should be submitted to the Disposal Committee on or before 2:00 P.M. of August 28, 2007 at the CPA Conference Room. All bids submitted shall be opened in public view immediately after the lapse of the deadline.

The bidder's bond shall be required in the amount of equal to 10% of the minimum bid price set by CPA in the form of cash, manager's check or cashier's check acquired from a reputable bank within Cebu City.

CPA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expense incurred in the preparation of the bid.

CPA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality / defect therein, and to accept such bid as may be deemed most advantageous to the government.

For inquiries, please contact Ms. Perlita G. Jumapao at Tel. No. 231-6849.

(Sgd.) MARIO G. TAN
BAC Chairman

Noted:

(Sgd.) ANGELO C. VERDAN
General Manager

(PDI–July 31, 2007)

World Bank to float bonds for RP dev't

Peso-denominated notes to fund gov't programs

By Michelle V. Remo

THE WORLD BANK AND THE INTERnational Finance Corp. (IFC) plan to issue peso-denominated bonds to the domestic capital market and use the proceeds to fund their lending programs for the Philippines.

Finance Undersecretary Roberto Tan said the plan to issue peso-denominated bonds was an indication of creditors' confidence in the local currency, adding that that the domestic climate is conducive for a bond issuance.

Tan said World Bank and IFC officials were in the process of determining the amount of peso-denominated bonds they would float.

The finance official said the World Bank and the IFC have not yet set a date for the bond float, but added it was likely to happen before the end of the year. The proceeds will help support development programs of the Philippine government over the short term.

Tan said the World Bank and the IFC could conduct the bond float either through a private placement or a public auction, using the facility of the Bureau of the Treasury.

World Bank is one of the Philippine government's biggest creditors, along with the Asian Development Bank and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation.

The IFC is an arm of the World Bank that provides lending to the private sector.

Multilateral agencies usually do not issue bonds denominated in pesos, Tan said.

This will be the first time the IFC will conduct such a float, Tan said, adding that World Bank and ADB had issued peso bonds before.

The last time the ADB issued peso-denominated bonds was in October 2005 when it raised P2.5 billion. Earlier reports indicated that the ADB could again issue another P2.5 billion in bonds within the year.

Under its fiscal program for 2007, the government is set to borrow $2.466 billion from foreign creditors, and P260 billion from domestic sources to plug its budget deficit and pay off debts that will fall due.

Of the foreign-borrowing program, $1.466 billion would come in the form of official development assistance (ODAs) from bilateral and multilateral agencies like World Bank. Loans in the form of ODAs are concessional in nature and therefore charges interest rates lower than commercial rates.

Last year, the World Bank granted an unusually huge loan—the $250-million "Development Policy Loan"—to the Philippine government, on top of other financial assistance. The loan was not tied to any specific project but served as budgetary support for the government.

The government has set a policy that its foreign borrowings should be composed more of ODAs rather than commercial borrowings to save on cost.

The Development Policy Loan from the World Bank carried an interest rate equivalent to Libor plus 50 basis points. The World Bank said the rate was substantially cheaper than the 200- to 300-basis-point spread charged by commercial creditors.

Other ODA extended by the World Bank to the Philippines include those that funded programs for public health and environmental services, as well as for enhancement of tax collection by the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

TAN

The World Bank had reiterated its call for the Philippine government to plug leaks in tax collection and curb corruption to ensure that the revenue generated would be spent properly on projects and programs for economic and social development.

VCO EXPORT TO CHINA AND AFRICA
A marketing agreement that will boost Philippine virgin coconut oil export to nontraditional markets has just been signed between Philippine International Trading Corporation (PITC) EVP Teddie Rivera (seated, third from right) and VCO Philippines president Tess Santos (to his left). Witnessing the signing are (standing, from left) VCOP chairman Sammy Latay, VCOP vice president Gerry Natividad, PITC manager Joel Rodriguez, and PITC VP for countertrade and exports Ma. Victoria Magcase.

As a bloc, Asean seen to hold its own against India, China

By Ronnel W. Domingo

MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHeast Asian Nations have the potential to be a strong contender against India and China in cornering offshore contracts in business process outsourcing if they acted as a single market.

According to Canada-based research firm XMG Inc., which specializes on information and communications technology, Asean countries need to play up their complementing advantages rather than compete with each other.

Lauro Vives, XMG chief analyst and founder, said Asean countries that have strong BPO potentials are the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam.

Vives said this was some of the findings of a comprehensive research XMG made to mark the Asean's 40th founding anniversary, as well as review the group as a region-state.

He said attainment of the Asean's goal of economic integration, at least in the IT sector, would be helped if members pursued the principle of turning the diversity that characterizes the region into opportunities for business complementation and making the Asean a more dynamic and stronger segment of the global supply chain.

"(However,) the Asean member countries have mostly tried to out-compete each other in the global marketplace," Vives said. "Intra-Asean trade still dwarfs that of trade with non-Asean countries at a ratio of almost 1 to 3."

He said such ratio indicated that most Asean members were more inclined to actively compete with their neighbors for a slice of the global market.

"As a result, most economic efforts driven by the Asean governments tend to cancel each other out and there are no emerging complementarities in these efforts that will encourage regional integration," Vives said.

Also, XMG research finding pointed out that each of the Asean countries have its own special niches in terms of manpower supply. It also said that infrastructure development and maturity are relatively the same across countries.

"Asean as a region state is a green field site with tremendous potential to serve the global ICT market and become a stronger segment of the global supply chain," Vives said.

Regulator limits brokers' voting rights in PSE

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMmision (SEC) en banc has limited brokers' voting rights to 20 percent even if brokers have a much larger stake in the Philippine Stock Exchange.

According to SEC Secretary Gerard Lukban, the commission is merely complying with the industry limit set by the securities laws.

PSE president Francis Lim said that, at present, brokers own less than 45 percent of the stock exchange.

This goes against a provision of the Securities Regulation Code (SRC), which limits ownership of an industry to 20 percent of an exchange.

The PSE enjoyed a one-year reprieve from the law. But that reprieve expired last July 20.

Lim said the PSE will evaluate its options, which include a possible sale of shares and enticing brokers to sell.

The PSE is also likely to ask the SEC to reconsider penalties related to the bourse's inability to immediately comply with the law.

Recently, the San Miguel Corp. Retirement Plan, the employee pension fund of food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp., sold its entire 9-percent stake in the PSE to a London-based investment fund, raising roughly P902 million, data from the PSE showed.

Based on a disclosure to the PSE, London investment fund GLG Emerging Markets Special Situation Fund bought a total of 1.395 million shares of PSE, priced at between P605.41 and P651.81 apiece. The deal was brokered by JP Morgan.

At the time of the deal, the PSE closed at P615 apiece. Yesterday, PSE shares were valued at P815 each.

SMC Retirement Plan, with other investors like the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), ATR Group and Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) bought the PSE shares for P119.50 apiece in 2004.

It was estimated that, at a transaction price of P649 a share, SMC Retirement Plan recorded a gain of roughly 443 percent over its acquisition price.

GLG Emerging Markets Special Situations Fund is among various funds managed by London-based hedge fund GLG Partners, one of the 15 largest funds in the world. The hedge fund manages roughly $16 billion in assets.

Sources also said other Asian investors are now inquiring about PSE blocks up for sale.

Singapore investment firm Kim Eng Group last year sold roughly 7 percent of its PSE shares to undisclosed foreign funds for P153.7 million.

This closure

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

NOW WE ARE CERTAIN THAT THE "public" is back in the stock market.

For one, your everyday ordinary working guy just snatched up the IPO of the country's biggest television network GMA 7, despite news about the Marcos family's ownership claim on a huge block of the IPO shares.

For several days during the subscription period, all sorts of people crowded the offices of ATR Kim Eng, the local manager of the IPO, just for an allocation of a thousand shares each.

Don't tell me they just expected to see some second-rate soap opera performers at the ATRKE offices!

* * *

It is definitely a lively market that we see nowadays because of the "public."

That should inspire both the stock market police, the Securities and Exchange Commission, and the self-governing Philippine Stock Exchange to work hard.

I mean, really, they must come up with new ways to protect the public regarding inside information. They can become stricter for instance in the way listed companies give out information to the public.

Last week, for instance, listed Semirara Mining reacted to news reports about its failure to disclose some court cases over certain "leased" property in its mining area on Semirara Island in Marinduque.

It seems that a firm called HGL Development claimed that it had the right over the property that Semirara Mining was using. Thus, HGL Development filed court cases against Semirara Mining.

The mining firm's information officer, lawyer John Sadullo, sent the SEC and PSE a letter to clarify the news report, which of course saw print in the dailies.

The company said that, among other things, its "right to the property is covered by a Special Land Use Permit No. 03-2007 issued by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources effective until March 12, 2010."

Look at that. The "disclosure" simply had to state the exact date of the ending of the DENR permit. I'm afraid there is no closure in it at all.

And so, to the boss-chief of the SEC and PSE, just exactly when did the permit start? When did the DENR issue the permit? Was it before World War II? Last year? Yesterday?

* * *

For that is the whole point of the exercise: Listed companies must tell us, the investing public, everything about an an issue that can affect the prices of their shares!

No ifs or buts, okay!

In that Semirara Mining disclosure, the exact date of the start of the DENR permit definitely has bearing on the claims of both Semirara Mining and HGL Development over the disputed property.

The date is important to me, as a stock market investor, because it can, for instance, help me decide which side to believe. This makes me an informed investor.

Unfortunately for us, the investing public, both the SEC and the PSE remain silent on such a creative way of … well, "disclosure."

* * *

By the way, word is out in the energy sector that our beloved "Napocor mafia" was forcing coal-fired power plants to buy Semirara coal, instead of importing higher BTU coal.

Last week, moreover, the government firm announced in the dailies that it was accepting bids for coal supplies.

It thus seems to me that this new "power crisis," i.e. brownouts, is self-inflicted. One private (meaning, not owned by Napocor) coal power plant in Luzon for instance had only one day of fuel left.

* * *

From out of the blue, The Philippine Ports Authority, or the PPA, just called off the bidding for the contract to operate the North Harbor, which is part of the Port of Manila, used for domestic cargo and passengers.

I mean, really, it is perhaps the busiest port in the entire country.

And this PPA all of a sudden just does not want to privatize its operation without offering even a stupid alibi or explanation. *Basta!*

Nobody knows if the PPA declared its own holiday to coincide with the bidding date, but everybody is certain that the Lola in Malacañang has vowed to privatize at least 28 seaports during her term.

Talk inside the PPA is that the bidding committee called it off under pressure from some top PPA officials, who apparently want an influential group to join the bidding, but forgot to take part in the prequalification process.

Now, only two groups passed the prequalification, out of the six groups that expressed intention to join the bidding. These were Metro Pacific Investment Corp. (MPIC), Asian Terminals Inc. (ATI), Harbour Center Port Terminal Inc., which later formed a consortium with Metro Pacific, Pier 8 Arrastre and Stevedoring Services Inc., Prudential Customs Brokerage Services Inc., and National Marine Corp.

Commenting on the called off bidding, PPA general manager Raul T. Santos was quoted in reports as saying: "This means the bidding and awards committee has not made a decision yet ... We don't know if the eligibilities of the bidders are revoked, but as long as there is no official withdrawal, everything stays the same. This could be a question of policy, this could be so many things."

Let me see if I get this right. You mean, boss, as head of the agency that is supposed to be on top of the whole thing, you do not know why such a momentous event, at least for the Lola in Malacañang and her "legacy," was called off from out of the blue, and for no reason at all? Is that it?

IMF chief hails RP fiscal progress

From page B1

crease in the value-added tax (VAT) two years ago as the government's "central achievement," but added that "major strides have also been taken in the banking and power sectors."

"The challenge going forward is to do more of the same," he said.

De Rato, who will step down as head of the 185-nation multilateral funding agency in a few weeks, arrived in Manila yesterday to meet with government officials and business leaders.

This marks the first trip of a sitting IMF head to the country since Michel Camdessus' 1994 trip at the height of the economic boom of the last decade.

With the Philippines having graduated from the Fund's tutelage last year, he said that other IMF member-nations could now emulate the country's example.

"I was pleased to see the Philippines paying off its outstanding debt to the IMF last December and post program monitoring (PPM) coming to an end," he said. "These events signified the substantial progress the Philippines has made in strengthening its fiscal and external positions."

"This is an area where other countries can learn from the Philippines," De Rato added. "Many countries face politically difficult reforms and, in our advice to them, we can hold up the Philippine VAT reform, with its attention to equity, as a model that they may wish to emulate."

He said that the IMF also relied on the country's wealth of technical experts in its effort to provide help to other member-countries facing similar issues that the country has hurdled.

During his visit, the IMF chief is expected to discuss recent global economic developments with local leaders as well as push for more fiscal reforms in the country, especially in terms of higher taxes to shore up the government's finances.

Speaker Jose de Venecia, who is set to meet De Rato today, said he would revive the decade-old idea of putting up an Asian version of the influential organization to be called the Asian Monetary Fund.

With his praise, De Rato stressed that the country needed to do more to ensure that it preserves the gains of recent tax reform measures.

"The recent weakness in revenue illustrates a particular need to step up the tax effort," he said. "Here better tax administration will be key."

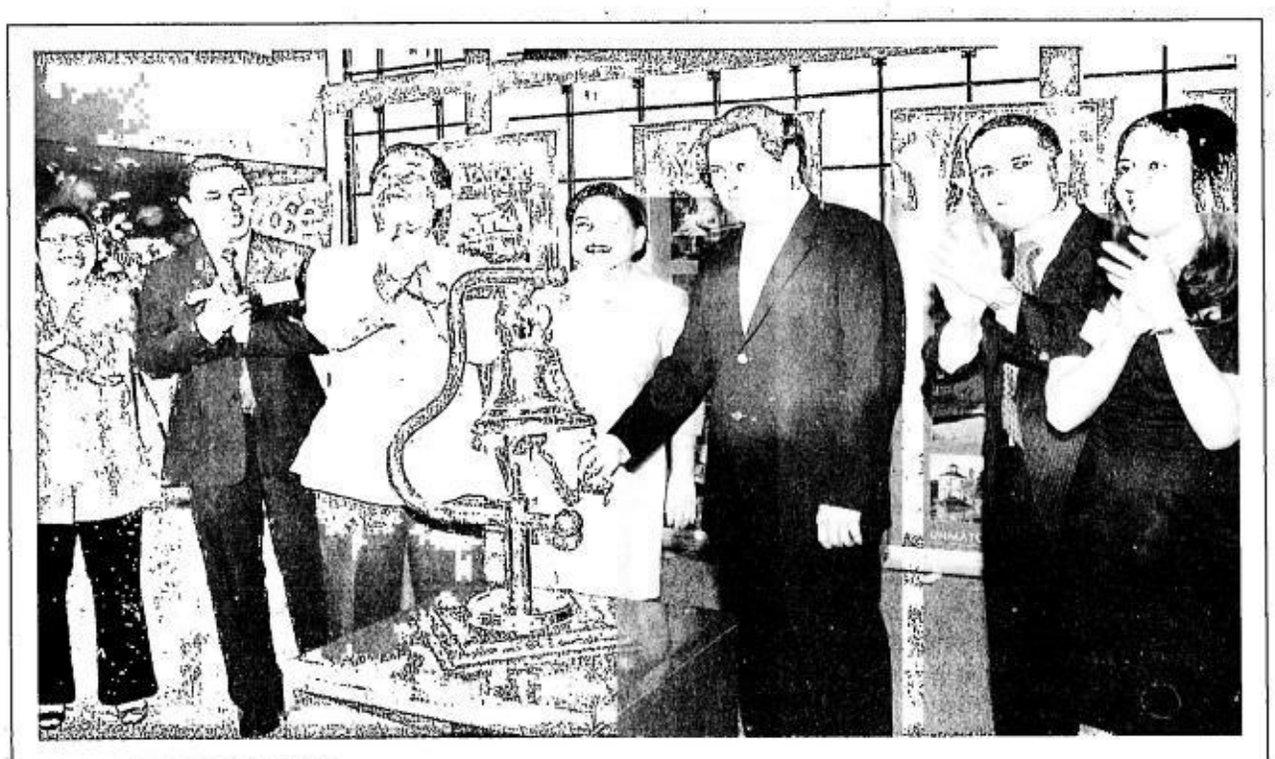
On top of more efficient tax collections, however, the IMF chief also stressed the need for more tax measures—a point being pushed by other multilateral funding agencies as well.

"I see a need for revenue-enhancing measures such as the rationalization of fiscal incentives since these will allow the government to stop giving away tax revenue unnecessarily," he said. "I would also argue for restoring the real value of excises on tobacco and alcohol. This would be good both for the budget and health reasons."

Despite the absence of financial assistance from the Fund, De Rato said that the relationship between the Philippines and the IMF remained strong and "relevant," especially in helping the country deal with massive capital inflows.

"As a result of improved market sentiment—due in large part to the VAT reform, as well as the current abundance of global liquidity—the Philippines now faces the challenge of plenty," he said. "I am referring here to dealing with capital flows. Given its cross-country experience in macroeconomic and financial sector issues, including in emerging markets, the IMF is uniquely positioned to provide input to the authorities on this issue."

Banks' bad loans-to-total loans ratio up in May



VISTA LAND LISTING
Senate President Manny Villar and Las Piñas City Rep. Cynthia Villar lead the bell ringing ceremony marking the official listing of Vista Land & Lifescapes Inc. at the Philippine Stock Exchange. With the couple are (from left) Vista Land president and CEO Jing Serrano, company director Mark Villar, PSE president Francis Lim, Paolo Villar, head of Vista Land corporate planning and Camille Villar. The company is majority owned by the Villars.

Lending down as banks shift to BSP's special deposit accounts

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE AVERAGE NONPERFORMING LOAN-TO-total loan ratio of the country's largest banks rose slightly in May as the decline in bad loans was offset by a faster drop in their total loan portfolio, according to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP).

In a press statement, the BSP said the NPL ratio in May stood at 5.33 percent, which was higher than the previous month's level of 5.27 percent.

The NPL ratio, which measures the banks' bad loans as a percentage of their total loan portfolio, is a closely watched indicator of the banking system's overall health.

"The month-on-month movement took place as the 2.93-percent reduction in bad loans was outweighed by the 4-percent decline in the banks' total loan portfolio," the central bank said.

Although higher than the previous month's level, the BSP pointed out that the May figure marked a 2.24-percentage point improvement over the 7.57-percent ratio reported in the same period last year.

In May, the total bad loans fell to P106.99 billion while the total loans extended by the banking system dropped to P2.007 trillion.

The BSP said the decline in bank lending was largely due to the lower volume of short-term placements with the central bank as several universal and commercial banks diverted more of their funds into special deposit accounts. These accounts were made available by the Bangko Sentral to help mop up excess liquidity in the banking system.

The BSP aims to limit domestic liquidity growth to below 20 percent, as monetary authorities believe that liquidity growth beyond that level puts the government's inflation targets at risk of being breached.

Since the SDAs were opened and other monetary-tightening measures were implemented in May, the BSP said about P200 billion in excess liquidity in the system had already been mopped up.

Exclusive of interbank loans, the industry's NPL-to-total loan ratio rose to 6.64 percent, up from the previous month's 6.45 percent. This transpired as the reduction in NPLs was outmatched by the 5.73-percent contraction in regular loans to P1.611 trillion.

"Nevertheless, this month's ratio stood better by 2.48 percentage points than the 9.12-percent ratio in the same period last year," the BSP said.

In the meantime, the ratio of restructured loans to total loans posted by the banking system climbed to 3.71 percent from the previous month's 3.59 percent, as the 0.68-percent drop in gross restructured loans to P75.3 billion was slower than the contraction in total loans.

The BSP pointed out, however, that the level of restructured loans in May 2007 was still lower than 5.10 percent recorded in the same period last year.

The banking system's ratio of real and other properties acquired (Ropa) to gross assets also rose to 3.68 percent from the previous month's 3.57 percent. The total Ropa stood at P163.11 billion.

The ratio of nonperforming assets to gross assets also rose in May to 5.89 percent from 5.79 percent in the previous month. Total bad assets of the universal and commercial banking system stood at P259.2 billion in May, down from the previous month's P260.34 billion, and the P323.97 billion recorded in the same month last year.

Exports of coco products down in H1

By Ronnel W. Domingo

EXPORTS OF MAJOR COCONUT-based products remained sharply lower than year-ago volumes as coconut plantations have yet to recover from the destruction of several strong typhoons that hit the country last year.

Preliminary data from the United Coconut Associations of the Philippines (Ucap) showed that exporters shipped out in the first half 675,671 metric tons of coconut products in copra terms, or almost 40 percent lower than year-ago's 1,122,677 MT.

As of end-June, coconut oil exports reached 324,846 MT, which was 45.6 percent lower than the 606,656 MT posted in 2006. Coconut oil is used in making food-related products, personal care products and fuel, such as biodiesel.

Shipments of copra meal, used as an ingredient for animal feeds, dropped 45 percent to 133,856 MT from 243,563 MT.

Desiccated coconut performed relatively better with 62,024 MT or just 5.1-percent down from 65,365 MT in the first semester of 2006.

Perennial best performer oleochemical—detergents, cosmetics and paint as well as base or additives for food, medicines, plastic, rubber and textiles—sold 64,149 MT in copra equivalent, or an increase of 9.3 percent from 58,672 MT.

In June alone, exports of the four major products reached 110,456 MT in copra terms, 3 percent lower than the 113,818 MT posted in June 2006.

Ucap said the June shipments showed the lowest year-on-year drop recorded in the last six months.

Also in June, coconut oil shipments slid 10.1 percent to 50,826 MT from 56,530 MT while those of of desiccated coconut dropped by 25.9 percent to 9,241 MT from 12,474 MT.

The deepest cut was observed with copra meal, as June shipments dropped 37 percent to 21,541 MT from 34,178 MT.

As in the entire first half, oleochemicals showed the only positive figure with deliveries totaling 15,493 MT or more then triple the 4,802 MT sent out in the same month last year.

SBC profit up 40% in Q2

By Daxim L. Lucas

SECURITY BANK CORP. REPORTed a sharp increase in its profit for the second quarter due to higher revenues during the period, the bank said in a statement.

The bank posted a net income of P657 million during the period, representing an improvement of P188 million or 40 percent over the previous year's figure.

The strong second quarter performance brought Security Bank's first half income to P1.41 billion, which was P404.3 million higher than the income reported in the same period last year.

Continued growth in deposits, which reached P100 billion, coupled with the expansion of its resources, particularly an P8-billion increase in net loans to P41.6 billion, contributed to the second quarter performance.

Net interest income for the quarter jumped 34.7 percent to P1.22 billion.

"We were cognizant that, with the further reduction in interest rates experienced this year versus last, trading gains were expected to slow down," chief financial officer Carlos M. Borromeo said in the statement.

"Hence, we placed increasing focus on building both the net margin and other income components of our revenue base," he added. "We are quite pleased that our efforts have proven quite favorable."

According to the bank, other income also grew by 45 percent to P556.9 million in the second quarter.

Fees and charges grew by 92 percent to P448.6 million during the same period.

With continued growth in the bank's commercial foreign exchange distribution activities, foreign exchange gains reached P104 million, up by 156 percent over the figure reporter in the same quarter of last year.

The bank said this offset a slowdown in securities trading gains, which reached only P4.3 million in the second quarter of 2007 compared to P108.8 million in the second quarter of 2006.

"We are committed to building our franchise," Borromeo said. "We are pleased that we are showing a healthy increase in lending notwithstanding the heightened competition for market shares."

Security Bank's operating profit also rose by 60 percent to P870.5 million during the period.

This translates to an underlying profit per share for the quarter of P2.64 versus P1.66 the year before. After taxes, earnings per share stood at P1.99 in the second quarter, for an annualized return on equity level of 22.6 percent.

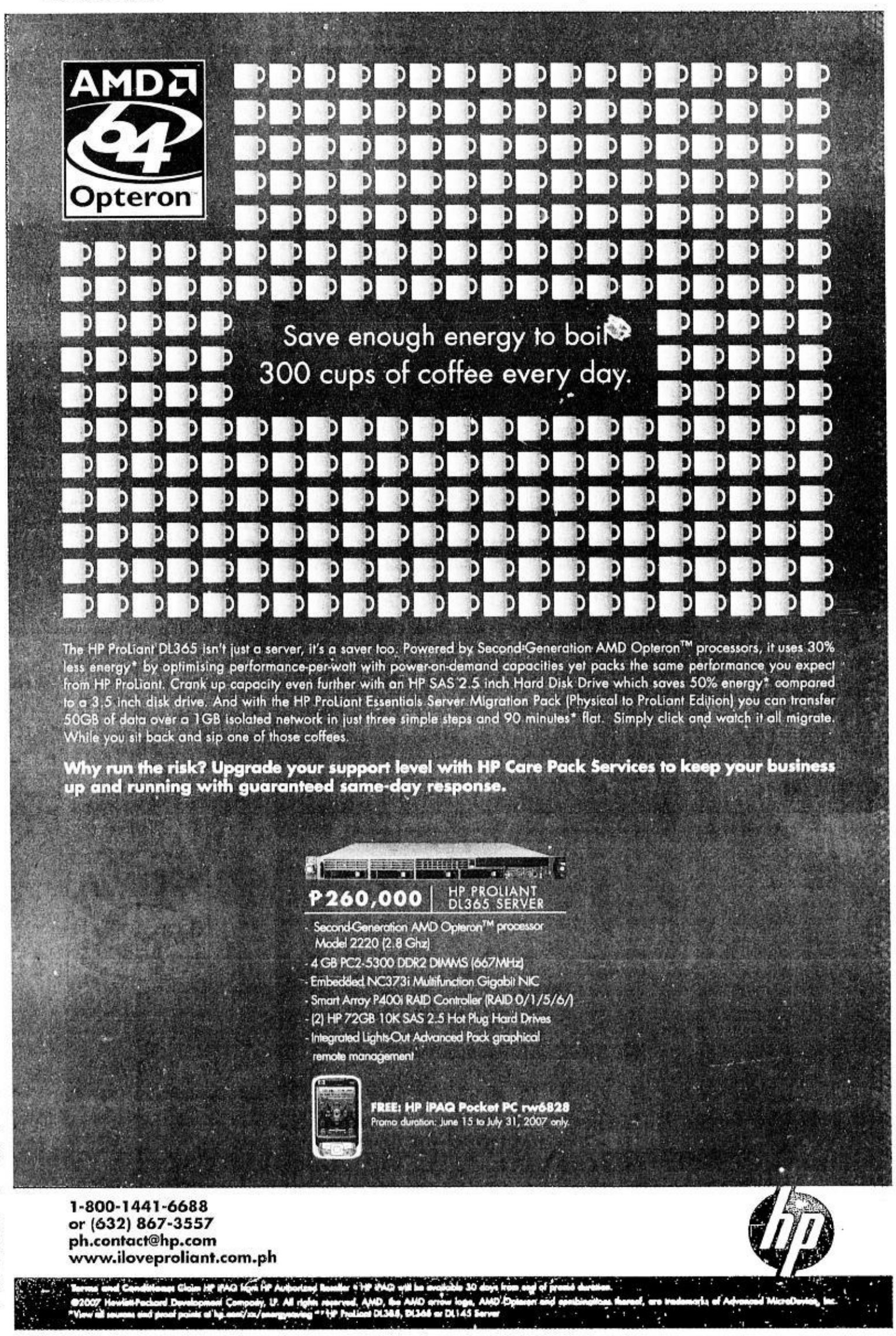
Makati Med CBA signed

THE MANAGEMENT OF MAKATI Medical Center Inc. and the 1,100-member Makati Medical Center Employees' Association signed on Thursday a three-year retroactive collective bargaining agreement that would cover the period March 1, 2007 to Feb. 28, 2010.

The agreement, signed by Makati Med president and CEO Richard N. Ferrer and employees union president Willy Pulia, provided for a yearly salary increase, an emergency cost of living allowance of P760.00 for seven months, birthday leave and loyalty award for employees, as well as a signing bonus. This was a first since the establishment of the union.

The CBA was signed after five months of negotiations.

Makati Med posted a net profit of P223 million in 2006, the highest achieved since it started operations in 1969. It recently raised P920 million in new capital through the issuance of convertible notes.



AdBoard's new website keeps public up to speed on Philippine advertising

THE ADVERTISING INDUSTRY HAS ALWAYS been a fast-paced and dynamic field that continues to spark the interests of the public. In the Philippines alone, it remains an exciting business that drives innovation and creativity among its players – from the advertisers to the agencies, and even the consumers.

Learn more and be updated about the latest trends on this ever-evolving industry in the country, through the Advertising Board of the Philippines (AdBoard), with its freshly refreshed website, www.adboard.com.ph.

Officially launched on July 12, the site contains new features like online feedback where visitors can send their comments regarding certain commercials, inquiries about Philippine advertising and other research information. There is also an online polling where registered participants have the chance to win thrilling prizes. The site has also been further enhanced by incorporating the AdBoard's Code of Ethics, ACRC Manual of Procedures and Standards of Trade Practices and Conduct Manual as free downloadable items. Updated news and announcements are also included in this new site plus links to the eight member associations of the AdBoard, namely, Pana, 4AS, UPMG, Asap, OAAP, Mores, CAAP and IBA. It also has a calendar format news archive and a photo gallery page of AdBoard's recent activities and events.

The AdBoard is the governing body composed of representatives of national organizations involved in the advertising practice. It is the umbrella organization of the advertising industry, serving to promote the development of the field through self-regulation, in harmony with industry goals.

Visit the website to learn more about the AdBoard, and to keep up to speed with the latest and greatest in the world of Philippine advertising.

BARYA CALLS TAWAG ABROAD LAUNCH

The officers and directors of Barya Calls are presented by Lyne Abanilla (right), from left: systems developer Alvin Rebulado and Marissa Rebulado; technical director Alex Vaszquez; managing director Helen Vasquez; finance director Tess Sayas and sales director Arturo Sayas during the launch which was recently held at Roma Salon of Manila Hotel. Barya Calls is a new company in the Philippines providing the new and intelligent way of calling abroad at very affordable rates and also offers livelihood opportunities. For info visit the website www.baryacalls.com, telefax no. (632)892-0268 with office address at Mezzanine, Citimotors Bldg., Don Bosco corner Pasong Tamo Sts., Makati City.

BITS Clips

Avent supports Positive Parenting Fair

PARENTING IS A NEVER-ENDING TASK; FROM PREGNANCY TO CHILDBIRTH TO the growing up stages, the parenting experience is full of highs and lows, and a parent's list of things-to-do is seemingly endless. But while it's often said that you can't teach someone how to be a parent, the right information and support can certainly guide them to make the right actions and decisions in their journey through parenthood. It is with this idea in mind that Rome Kanapi of the Philippine Association for Childbirth Education (Pace), and Dyan Cortez of Tumble Tots came up with the idea of holding the Positive Parenting Fair. Supported by leading infant feeding brand Avent, the fair will be held on Aug. 4 and 5 in Davao City and Aug. 11, 12 and 18 in Manila and will feature a series of enlightening seminars on childbirth and parenting. Admission to the fair is free and will not only have sessions on different childbirth and parenting topics - importance of reading, play, music and positive discipline - but will also feature a sharing on the parenting experience from celebrities. To know more or to register for the Positive Parenting Fair, call (082)225-1847 and (0917)719-8015 for Davao and (02)687-6375 and (0917)701-0097 for Manila. For more information about prepared childbirth classes of Pace contact Rome Kanapi at 436-1757 or 0917-541-5114. Avent is available at the infant section of leading department stores, specialty stores and hypermarkets nationwide. To know more about Avent, visit www.avent.com or e-mail at avent@ljs.com.ph.

Asean Energy Business Forum 2007

THE THREE-DAY ASEAN ENERGY BUSINESS FORUM 2007 (AEBF) IN SINGAPORE will have in-depth discussions on opportunities to close the billion-dollar gap in building energy infrastructures in Asean. AEBF 2007 is being staged by Leverage International, an international exhibition and conference organizer, on Aug. 22-24, at Shangri-La Hotel in Singapore. It is also organizing PowerTrends 2007 on Sept. 19-21, at the World Trade Center Metro Manila. AEBF 2007 is being held in conjunction with the annual Asean Ministers of Energy Meeting in Singapore. The gathering includes energy ministers, senior energy officials and businessmen from Asean, Australia, China , India, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea. The theme is "Energy Trade and Investment". Exhibits will be presented in the fields of power, oil and gas, coal, renewable and alternative energy projects in Asean and neighboring countries. PowerTrends 2007 will have "Energy Security" for its theme. Exhibits will be presented on power, oil and gas, coal mining, renewable energy, biofuels, energy management and logistics and storage. Those interested to participate may contact Leverage International (Consultants) Inc at leverage@leverageinternational.com or by fax at (632) 810-1594 or by phone (632)818-6828 or (632) 810-1389.

Advanced Contact Solutions: 6 and growing

ADVANCED CONTACT SOLUTIONS IS NOW READYING FOR THE OPENING OF its 6th and newest facility at the former Rustan's Superstore, Araneta Center Cubao. With 1,600 seats, the site features industry class technology and telecommunications to provide unparalleled customer service to its clients. Advanced Contact Solutions has five other locations. Three of these are in Makati, another in Cabuyao Laguna and the last site was in Shoe Mart - Lipa Batangas. ACS now has nearly 7,000 employees and is expanding rapidly as their clients require more and more services from the company. Recruitment for the Cubao facility is set to begin at the end of July. Openings for this site include customer service agents, team leaders, program managers as well as various support functions to strengthen the current ACS organization. Advanced Contact Solutions is a pioneer and leader in the call center/BPO industry. ACS is the first and only publicly listed call center in the Philippine Stock Exchange through Paxys. Last year, ACS notched its ISO 9001:2000 Quality systems Certification. ACS serves top Philippine, US Fortune 500, Australian, UK and Canadian companies and aims to be the global contact center of choice.

Healing pilgrimage

JOIN FATHER CORSIE LEGASPI AS HE LEADS A HEALING PILGRIMAGE TO Lourdes, Fatima, Rome, and other great European cities on Oct. 8 to 19. A Guci Award recipient in 2006 for outstanding public service, Father Corsie will conduct healing sessions and say masses during the tour. For those interested, please call 809-0605, 809-0764 or 0917-4110154.

Healthy lifestyle with pineapple for your joints

ONE SERVING (2 SLICES, 112G) OF PINEAPPLE HAS ONLY 60 CALORIES AND provides an excellent source of vitamin C and manganese. Fresh pineapples are the only known source of bromelain, an enzyme that research shows has anti-inflammatory properties that may alleviate symptoms of osteoarthritis, making pineapple a superfood for your joints. In one British review, researchers looked at ten studies examining bromelain's effects on osteoarthritis of the knee and found significant relief of pain and swelling. This proves that a pineapple a day can definitely prevent arthritis from hampering your lifestyle. As a proteolytic enzyme, research also shows bromelain acts to "clean up" dead cells after injury or joint stress, thereby helping to restore normal function. Tropical Gold is the world's sweetest pineapple. Dole Tropical Gold pineapples are grown here in the lush Philippine tropics – and will be one of the products on display in the forthcoming World Food Expo (Wofex) 2007 slated Aug. 1 to 4, at the World Trade Center, Manila, Philippines. Wofex 2007 will be featuring various health products during its 4-day run. For more information, call Premier Events Plus Group Inc at 929-7993, 929-7963, 435-4730, and 436-4209 or e-mail info@PEPGroup.com or check website at www.wofex.com.

PPTF celebrates Ruby Anniversary

THE PHILIPPINE PRINTING TECHNICAL FOUNDATION INC (PPTF) CELEBRATES 40 years of service to the printing industry with a General Membership Meeting and induction of new members on Aug. 3, 6:30 p.m. at the Manila Hotel. This was announced recently by PPTF president Benito J. Brizuela Sr. The Philippine Daily Inquirer is a long time member of the PPTF and has benefited from its skills training program. Ideal Marketing & Manufacturing Corp is the major sponsor for the 40th anniversary celebration, which will see 40 new member companies sworn into the organization. The PPTF was founded on July 27, 1967 to help elevate the technical skills of printing press companies in the Philippines. In line with its mission, the PPTF conducts seminars and publishes a technical magazine and a member's newsletter to keep print professionals abreast of innovations in the graphic arts industry worldwide and strengthen the bonds of cooperation within the industry. For more information on PPTF program and membership requisites, contact the PPTF Secretariat at 713-2671 and 713-0902, fax 713-0905 and e-mail pptf@tri-isys.com

The Happy Feet Anniversary Sale!

ENJOY BUY ONE TAKE ONE ON ALL MARIZZA MODELS AS HAPPY FEET CELEbrates its anniversary. Happy Feet Marizza Wooden Sandals are the perfect way to be stylish and healthy all the time. Footbeds are biomechanically designed to make your feet healthier every time you use them. The toe grips enable foot and leg exercise; making your legs shapelier, the arch supports help keep the feet in tip-top shape, and the heel cups provide adequate support for the rest of your feet. With Happy Feet Marizza Wooden Sandals, wearers can just simply walk their way to happier, healthier feet. And with so much strap colors to choose from, who would ask for more? Happy Feet Marizza Sandals are available at our stores in San Juan (Wilson cor. P. Guevarra, tel. no 726-5393), Glorietta 1 in Makati (tel. 818-6716), Robinsons Galleria (3rd Floor, tel. no 633-2739), Festival Supermall in Alabang (tel. no 842-2978), Robinsons Place Cainta (tel. no 656-8028) and Pavillion Mall in Biñan, Laguna (tel. no 049-411-3181). Also available in Davao (0918-925-1168), Roxas City (0916-750-0769), Bacolod/Iloilo (0917-887-1171) and Cagayan de Oro (0917-706-1329), and selected SM Department Stores. You can also e-mail at queries@happyfeetsandals.com. Promo is valid from July 27- Aug. 19.

For your Classified and Obituary Ads please call 637-2008

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	5cols X 24cms	16.38cms, x 24cms.		
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1598 M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos. 522-0000; 526-0100 connecting all departments

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines calls for the submission of Letters of Intent (LOIs) from potential bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project as stated below:

Item / Description	Approved Budget	Source of Funds
1 Lot Hiring of Consultant for the Conversion of the Existing Internal Audit Process to Risk-Based Audit Approach	P3,500,000.00	LBP Funds

Interested consultants must submit their LOIs and secure the Eligibility Documents, upon payment of a Non-Refundable Fee of P 500.00, on or before August 14, 2007. The deadline for the submission of Eligibility Documents shall be on the date of the opening of Eligibility Documents on August 15, 2007, 1:00 PM at Procurement Department, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, 1598 M.H. Del Pilar Street, Malate, Manila.

LANDBANK shall determine the eligibility of interested consultants in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) and other Government Rules and Regulations. Other eligibility requirements are the following:

a. Must have at least two (2) years experience in handling consulting services on risk-based audit approach
b. Must have completed or currently handling at least one (1) project comparable to the proposed engagement
c. All members of the proposed Project Engagement Team (PET) must have at least two (2) years experience in risk-based auditing

The shortlist of prospective bidders shall consist of not more than five (5) consultants. The criteria and rating system for shortlisting shall consider the experience and track record of the consultants. Only those who are eligible and included in the shortlist shall be allowed to secure the Bid Documents, upon payment of a Non-Refundable Fee of P1,800.00, and submit bids. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184. The Quality Based Evaluation/Selection (QBE/QBS) procedures shall be used in the evaluation of bids. The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Bid Documents.

LANDBANK reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s)

(PDI - July 31, 2007) BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES
1598 M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos. 522-0000; 526-0100 connecting all departments

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the projects as stated below:

Item / Description	Approved Budget	Source of Funds
2,725 Bxs. 1 Ply Continuous Form Size: 11" x 14-7/8", Blue Bar without Side Perforation, Pre-numbered 2,000 Sheets/Box	P2,073,943.00	LBP Funds
1,230 Bxs. 2 Ply Continuous Form Size: 11" x 14-7/8", Blue Bar without Side Perforation, Pre-numbered 1,000 Sheets/Box	P 899,622.00	LBP Funds

The Bid Documents will be available at the Procurement Department at the 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, 1598 M. H. del Pilar cor. Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila starting July 31, 2007 upon payment of non-refundable fee of P1,500.00.

The Pre-Bid Conference will be held at Procurement Department Conference Room at 2.00 PM, August 9, 2007. Bidding for the above requirement is scheduled on August 22, 2007 at 1:00 PM.

Please address your queries to the Head-Secretariat, Bids and Awards Committee, or call 405-7370, 551-0000 locals 2290 & 2293.

LANDBANK reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s).

(PDI - July 31, 2007) BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

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JAC FILIPINAS PAWNSHOP, INC., G/F Ever Gotesco Grand Central, Caloocan City will sell all unredeemed pledges for the months of Jan. & Feb. 2007 on August 22, 2007 at 11:00 a.m. J. Lanuza – Auctioneer

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Sen. Angara to lead NREA recognition rites

RE-ELECTED SEN. EDGARDO J. ANGARA WILL lead today the "Parangal" ceremonies to honor the Outstanding members of the National Real Estate Association (NREA), at the Makati Sports Club in Makati City.

Marketing guru Alejandro S. Manalac, NREA national president, announced that Angara, a former Senate President, will bare his legislative agenda for the 14th Congress. He will also be inducted honorary member during the affair.

Among those to receive recognition are re-elected Rep. Eduardo C. Zialcita of Parañaque City, former NREA chair; Rep. Jose G. Solis of Sorsogon, former NREA President; Albert S. Garcia of Bataan, NREA chapter president; Rep.Mauricio G. Domogan of Baguio City; and Rep. Marcelino Teodoro of Marikina City; Mar Bacani, re-elected councilor of Antipolo City; and former Mayor Gaudencio Ferrer, board member of Bataan, among others.

NREA will also honor its immediate past chair and president Architect Nestor S. Mangio, new chair of Clark International Airport Corporation; and Honorary Member Lawyer Romero F. S. Quimbo, CEO and president of Pag-IBIG Fund, as one of the Ten Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) awardees.

NREA will also fete its organizationman Jose "Ka Pepe" Manalad, NREA's founding Chairman, who is also celebrating his birth anniversary on July 31.

The Mid-year Assembly, which opens with a Thanksgiving Mass at 6 p.m., will also feature the launching of the NREA convention and Trade Exhibits, to be held on Sept. 27 and 28.

For more particulars, pls. contact the NREA Secretariat at tel. nos. 913-4463, or 912-3492 (telefax).

"To you, Lord, I lift up my soul." --- Psalm 25:1

COMMISSIONER EDMUNDO MERCADER REYES, SR. ("MUNDING")

(Bureau of Immigration & Deportation 1966-1986)

World War II Veteran, Lawyer, Journalist, Coffee Shop Habitué,
Loving Husband and Father, Doting Lolo and Loyal Friend

Peacefully joined his Creator after receiving the last rites of the Roman Catholic Church on 30 July 2007.

"Munding" will be missed by his beloved spouse Carmencita Ongsiako Reyes, Congresswoman of the Lone District of Marinduque and their children: Dr. Violette O. Reyes, Mr. Garnik and Dr. Bernadette Reyes Azarnia and sons Armen and Simon; Mr. Luis and Atty. Maria del Carmen Reyes Vega and sons Edmundo Luis and Lorenzo Ramon; Atty. Regina O. Reyes and sons Gian and Paolo; Former Congressman Edmundo Jr. and Camille Sison Reyes and children Edmundito, Marianna Carmen, Sandro and Amandine. He will also be missed by his sisters, brothers and in-laws: Nenita R. Sto. Domingo, Meding R. Festin (+), Peggy R. Laurel (+), Luisito, Rufino (+), Nonoy, Citas (+), Oscar Ongsiako (+), Ting Ongsiako, Meldy O. Cojuangco, Baby Ongsiako (+), Myriam O. Montelibano and other in-laws, nieces and nephews.

His remains lie in state at Chapel 1 of The Mortuary & Crematory at The Heritage Park, Bayani Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

He will be brought to Marinduque, his birthplace, on Thursday, 2 August 2007, where he will lie in state for a 9:00 am Mass at the Diocese of Boac Cathedral and a 3:00 pm Mass at the Sta. Cruz Poblacion Church in Marinduque.

Necrological Services will follow after the 10:00 am Mass at the Santuario de San Antonio Church, Forbes Park, Makati City on Friday, 3 August 2007.

Cremation Service at The Heritage Park will follow immediately after the Necrological Services.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Monastery of St. Clare, Boac, Marinduque will be most appreciated.

More Classified Ads

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Cebu Port Authority B3

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith
(2 Timothy 4)

MANUEL BANZON AQUINO

Has gone to his eternal rest in the peace of our Lord on July 30, 2007 at the age of 74.

His loving mother **Nanay Ely**; wife **Titang**; children **Jun & Amy, Nenette & Eric, Bedjie, Marissa & Melvin, Francis & Lai, Joey & Nina, Cecille** and **Eloisa**; siblings **Jorge, Adelita & Carlos**; grandchildren; other relatives and friends request prayers for his everlasting joy in the company of the angels and saints.

His body lies in state at Christ the King Parish Church, Greenmeadows, Q.C.

Cremation will be on Saturday, August 4, 2007 at the Holy Cross Memorial Park after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at the Christ the King Parish Church.

Lilia Imperio vda. Dela Cruz

of Rizal, Nueva Ecija

peacefully joined our Creator on July 29, 2007 at the age of 73.

Her loving children **Blesilda, Rommel, Fr. Robert, Noel, Lynette** and **Albert**, her children-in-law, grandchildren and remaining sisters and brothers request other relatives and friends to join them in prayer for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Maria Assumpta Seminary Auditorium, Cabanatuan City. Final rites and interment will be on Friday, August 3, 2007, 9:00 a.m. at the St. Nicholas of Tolentine Cathedral Crypt, Cabanatuan City.

Death Notice

Dr. Antonio Avecilla Celis
April 12, 1918 - July 27, 2007

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, Inc., 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, August 1, 2007 at the Manila North Cemetery after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at Arlington.

ENCARNACION "NENA" MUÑOZ-REYES

(March 9, 1915 – July 28, 2007)
Papal Awardee "Pro-Ecclesia et Pontifice"

Her body lies in state at Sanctuarium, No. 739 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on August 2, 2007 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque, Metro Manila, after the 10:00 a.m. Holy Mass.

Please omit flowers. You may give donations in her name to any charitable institution or to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima, Valenzuela, Metro Manila.

In loving memory on the 12th death anniversary of

Carlito Yllano Cunanan

who was peacefully called to his Creator on July 31, 1995.

Holy Mass will be offered today at the following Churches:

Sta. Maria della Strada, Katipunan Road, Quezon City
St. Ignatius Cathedral, Camp Aguinaldo
Christ the King Parish, Green Meadows Avenue
Mary The Queen Parish, Greenhills
Santuario de San Jose, Greenhills
Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park
Holy Child Parish, Bonifacio Naval Station, Fort Bonifacio
Nuestra Señora De Gracia Parish, Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City
St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Parish, Magallanes Village
St. Jerome and St. Susana Emiliani Church, Alabang
St. James the Great Church, Ayala Alabang Village

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5-mo VAT collection falls short of ₱73.67-B target

Lifting of 70-percent VAT cap last year blamed

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL Revenue's value-added tax collection in the first five months of the year reached P56.6 billion, falling short of the P73.67 billion programmed for the period.

The P17.12-billion deficiency in the VAT collections was among the reasons for the BIR's failure to generate its expected tax revenue for the period.

The five-month VAT collection, however, represented a P180-million increase from year-ago's P56.37 billion.

The BIR said the shortfall in the VAT collection was partly due to the lifting of the 70-percent VAT cap last year.

Revenue officials explained earlier that when the cap was still in place, corporate taxpayers were allowed to claim only 70 percent of their input value-added tax credits for any given tax period. When the cap was lifted, corporate taxpayers were allowed to claim the entire amount of their input VAT credits.

A tax audit report earlier made by the Department of Finance, mother agency of the BIR, said the lifting of the VAT cap dragged down the government's potential revenue collection. But the DOF also said the amount of shortfall should not have been that big as reported for the five-month period.

According to the audit report, the lifting of the VAT cap has reduced potential revenue collection by only P2.26 billion in the first quarter. For the five-month period, the reduction in collection should have only be a little higher than the first quarter figure, the DOF said.

BIR officials said some corporate taxpayers were suspected of claiming excessive input VAT credits.

The BIR said that although firms were allowed to deduct their input VAT (the VAT they pay every time they purchase a product or service whose price includes VAT) from the 12-percent VAT on their sales, they should at least still be paying an estimated 3- to 5-percent VAT.

"The analysis of the January-to-May (tax) returns showed that most taxpayers cannot even meet the effective VAT rate of at least 3 percent for the sale of goods, and 5 percent for the sale of services," the BIR said in a statement.

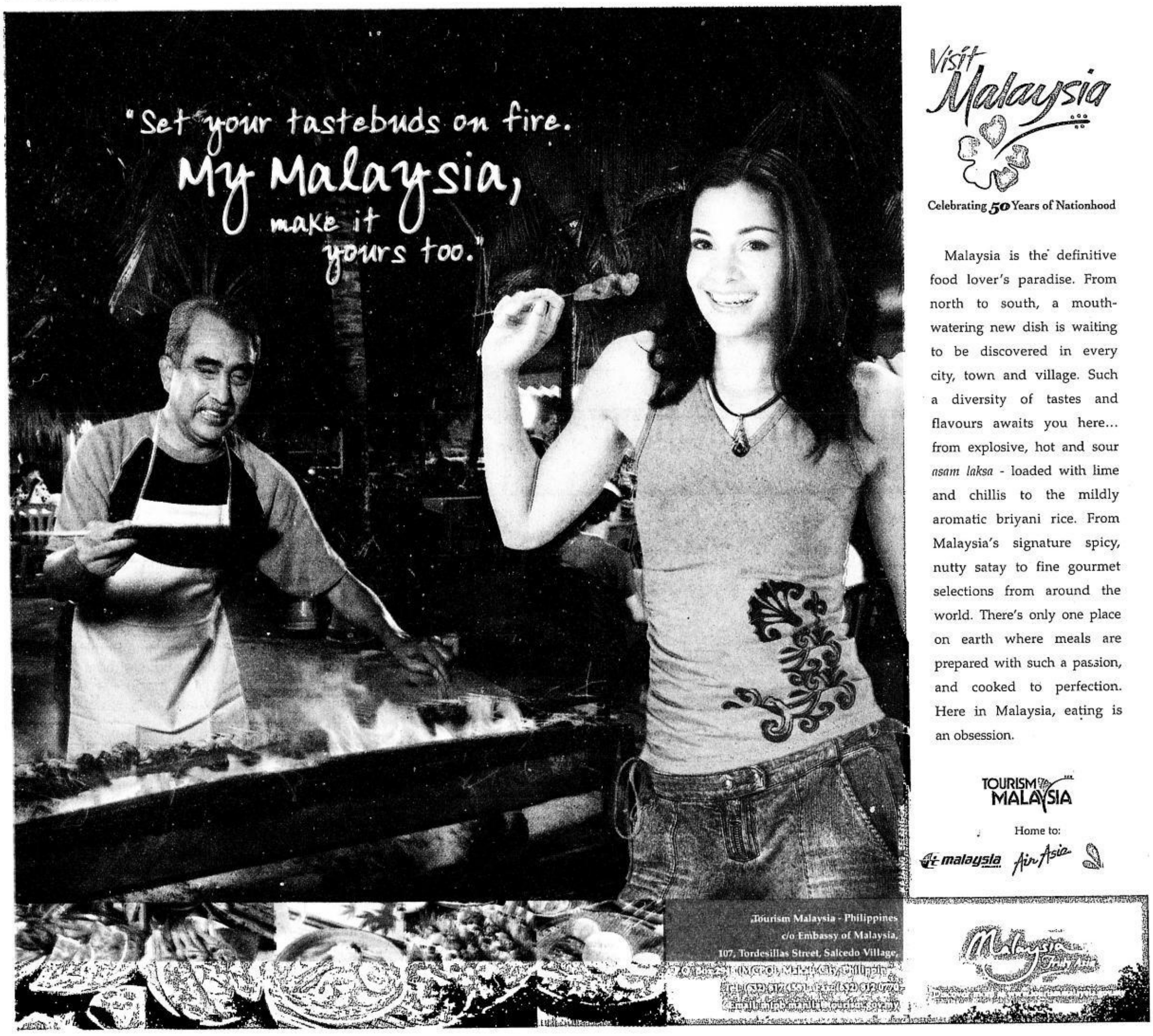
For this reason, Internal Revenue Commissioner Lilian Hefti issued Revenue Memorandum Order (RMO) No. 16-2007, which directed revenue personnel to be more strict in validating the accuracy of input VAT credit claims of taxpayers.

The RMO requires revenue officers to validate the accuracy of input VAT credit claims related to so-called "big ticket" purchases. These type of purchases are those made by a corporate taxpayer from a supplier that accounts for 5 percent of the annual purchases of the former.

For January to May, the BIR's total collection reached P285.6 billion, short of the goal of P312.2 billion for the period.

The BIR was directed to implement measures to shore up collection and recover from the shortfall in the first half. For the entire year, the BIR is tasked to collect P765 billion in taxes to help meet the government's goal of limiting the budget deficit to only P63 billion.

The government's deficit limit for this year is consistent with the goal of posting a balanced budget by next year.



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The Rise of the Global Filipino Family

From the humble blue-collar worker to the highly skilled, high-earning, tech-savvy professional. From 'OFW' to 'Global Filipino.' Indeed, overseas Filipinos have come a long way. Their jobs are no longer limited to looking after homes, building bridges or crewing luxury cruise ships. These days, you are more likely to find them writing code for top software companies, reporting for international news agencies and managing Fortune 500 corporations.

Global Filipino families at Barrio Fiesta Stockton on Teen, York

And with 10 million of these hard-working Filipino men and women holding vital positions across the four corners of the world, their impact is truly global.

But as important as their role may be on the global scale, Global Filipinos remain Filipino. They work hard, strive and exist primarily for their families. Together, the Filipino working abroad and their family here in the country make up the Global Filipino Family.

Time to reap the rewards

In the history of the Filipino working abroad, there has never been a time like now when, more than ever the Global Filipino Family can enjoy the fruits of their hard work and the sacrifices they have made.

Global Filipinos bring in Php14 billion to the country (more than foreign investors) through remittances to their family. And the Philippine government, recognizing this significant contribution to the Philippine economy, has passed laws for their welfare and the protection of their rights, whether they are overseas or back here in their country. Overseas Filipinos can even exercise their right to choose their leaders and shape the Philippine politics.

Closer through technology

Technology has played a key role in the rise of the Global Filipino Family. Recent developments in communications and information technology have made it easier, as well as cheaper, for overseas Filipinos and their families to stay in touch. Through mobile phone texting, e-mailing and voice and video chatting, they can talk to and see each other in real-time. They no longer have to wait for the letters or the pictures to arrive in the mail.

Exclusively for the Global Filipino Family

Commerce has also adapted itself to cater to the special needs of Global Filipino Families. From shopping centers to restaurants, airline companies to real estate developers, every other business has a program or offer exclusive for balikbayans and their families.

But probably the most valuable of these moves by commercial entities is the host of improved and new banking services offered by financial institutions such as the Philippine National Bank. PNB offers innovative remittance services that make it easier for overseas Filipinos to send money to their loved ones, as well as other programs that bring the Global Filipino Family, the Filipino working abroad and the family here in the Philippines, closer to their dreams.

And with 10 million of these hard-working Filipino men and women holding vital positions across the four corners of the world, their impact is truly global

A Global Filipino family celebrating Philippine Independence Day with PNB Canada

Privileges Na Big time!

Remit now and earn 4x more points!*

May discounts na, may pabuya pa with

PNB Big Time Privileges

Engrandeng Pabuya! Get 3 Big Time Privilege points for every remittance transaction! Use these points to redeem big time pabuya items! *And if you remit now until Sept. 30, 2007, you get **4x more** points!

Naglalakihang Discounts! Show your Global Filipino Money Card (GFMC) at our select partner establishments and get freebies and discounts!

Get freebies and discounts from our select partner establishments!
Philippines:
Automatic Centre, LA Gear, York, Sledgers, Blums, Kickers, Expressions

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Red Ribbon and Super Bowl of China discounts available from July 16 onwards.
Discounts available to all GFMC holders. Rewards are initially available to remitters.

For more information, call 573-8888.
Log on to www.pnb.com.ph
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PNB Global Filipino Family
Mas malawak na mundo. Hatid namin sa inyo.

A typical Sunday scene in a PNB Singapore branch.

PNB Overseas:

More than Secure Remittance for overseas Filipinos

When you are a Filipino working abroad, not only are you far from home, you are also far from your loved ones. It also means that every single day you are surrounded by a strange culture, strange food, strange smells, strange faces. And anywhere you go—at work, in shops, on the streets—everyone is speaking a language you do not understand or are still trying to learn.

Thus, for Global Filipinos around the world, the 106 overseas branches of the Philippine National Bank provide more than a secure channel for their remittances to their families. A PNB overseas office gives the homesick Global Filipino a taste of home. And with its highly professional Filipino staff, it provides the personalized and warm service one cannot get anywhere else in a foreign country.

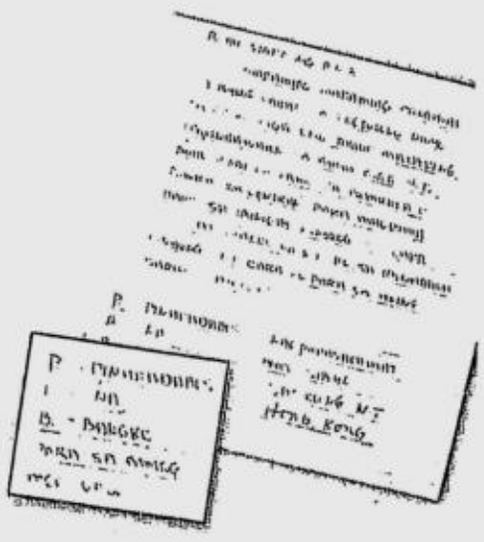
A New Era of Padala

New technologies in communications and information technology changed the way Global Filipino Families stay in touch with each other across the oceans. They have also changed the way Global Filipino Families send and receive remittance. As SMS, e-mail and web chat allow them to communicate instantly and more frequently (even daily), the Filipino working abroad can constantly ask his family what they need, while the family can inform him immediately when an expense comes up. So the practice of remitting a big amount once or twice a year for general expenses is now replaced by remitting smaller amounts more frequently for specific, everyday expenses.

A Trusted Name in Remittance

This new trend in remittance has spawned the appearance of new and small money transfer agents. But for Global Filipinos, there is nothing like sending their hard-earned money through a name they have known for years.

The Philippine National Bank, with 91 years of banking experience, gives them and their families the security and peace of mind that they need. And through PNB's wide global network (the widest for a Philippine bank) and the backing of over 600 foreign bank partners, more overseas Filipinos can enjoy easy and convenient remittance services. To illustrate just how much difference PNB makes in the lives of Filipinos abroad, let us conclude with an actual letter sent to one of PNB's branches in Hong Kong by Alice Sibal, a Global Filipino working there.



'Maraming maraming salamat sa inyong lahat sa pagtulong ninyo sa amin mga OFW'
- Alice Sibal, Sai Kung H.K.

Pangako Namin ay Bilis sa paghatid ng padala!

Sa PNB, remittance ay garantisado.
Get a 100% rebate on your service fee for late transmittals!*

REMIT VIA DOOR-TO-DOOR DELIVERY
Guaranteed delivered to your family within 24 hours in key cities in the Philippines (within 3 days for provincial areas).

REMIT TO PNB REMITTANCE CENTERS
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* Claims are subject to investigation. PNB will not be held liable if our partners are found responsible for the late arrival of remittances.
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PNB's Global Family of Services

For the Global Filipino Family, PNB is offering a truly Global Family of Services. This is the result of PNB's years of anticipating the Global Filipino Family's needs and continuously developing its services to suit their evolving lifestyle.

The Global Filipino Family is one of the most important client sectors for PNB. So PNB has constantly upgraded its services and widened its reach as the Global Filipino Family's profile change and grow from generation to generation.

A few years back, as part of its continuing efforts to be always in touch with the needs of the Global Filipino Family, PNB introduced the **Global Filipino Money Card** or **GFMC**. The GFMC is the easiest and fastest way for the Global Filipino to send cash to their family. And now, thanks to the **PNB Big Time Privileges** program, they can enjoy discounts or freebies and, for every remittance transaction, earn points which they can use to redeem reward items.

PNB recently launched **Speed Guarantee** to assure remitters that money can be sent and claimed when it is most needed. This assurance covers the 24-Hour Door-to-Door Delivery and money sent to PNB payout agents. PNB even backs this up with a money-back guarantee: a 100-percent rebate for remittance fee if the money does not arrive on the promised time of arrival.

What's more, PNB's remittance services eliminate the guessing game that happens in other channels. Recipients of PNB remittances are sent SMS alerts informing them that their money have arrived.

Another way to track PNB remittances is through the Internet. With **PNB Remittance Tracker**, one just has to log on to the PNB website and key in the remittance reference number and to see the status and full details of the remittance transaction.

For the more tech-savvy, **PNB Web Remittance** is the choice not only because it is less time-consuming, but also because it is the most economical means available in Canada, the United States, and parts of Europe. With the busy and fast-paced lifestyle of today, being able to remit through the computer—whether at home or at work— with a few mouse-clicks saves a lot of time.

When Canada opened its doors to skilled workers, Filipinos saw the opportunity to work for a better life for their families; and today, hundreds of thousands of Filipinos are working there. They can use **Telephone Remittance** to send money to the Philippines, for their families immediate needs. Using either their mobile phones or landlines, they can call the toll-free number 1-866-886-8806, to speak to a representative or access the IVR system.

Meanwhile, Filipinos in Europe can just dial: 0207-397-1367, 0207-397-1340, and 0207-792-9647. So even if they cannot go outside because of the weather, their families in the Philippines will still receive money.

Filipinos are world-renowned texters. And **SMS Remittance** is another convenient way to send money.

There is also a more traditional way to send remittance. In Singapore and Japan, Filipinos can send money through the post office.

Filipinos love to send something to their families here whenever there is a special occasion. PNB's **Rapid Hatid** allows Filipinos abroad to send Balikbayan boxes through any PNB office in the country they are in.

For those who want to send dollars but their families do not have dollar bank accounts, there is **Dollar Door-to-Door Delivery**. At present Dollar Door-to-Door is available for deliveries to Metro Manila only but will soon reach other parts of the Philippines.

Global Filipinos can continue paying their SSS, Pag-IBIG dues, their families utilities, their kids' school tuition, insurance policies, and loan amortization through the **Overseas Bills Payment System**. Through this convenient service, payments are remitted directly to the school, utility company or property developer, eliminating the need for the family here in the Philippines to then go to payment centers to beat the deadline.

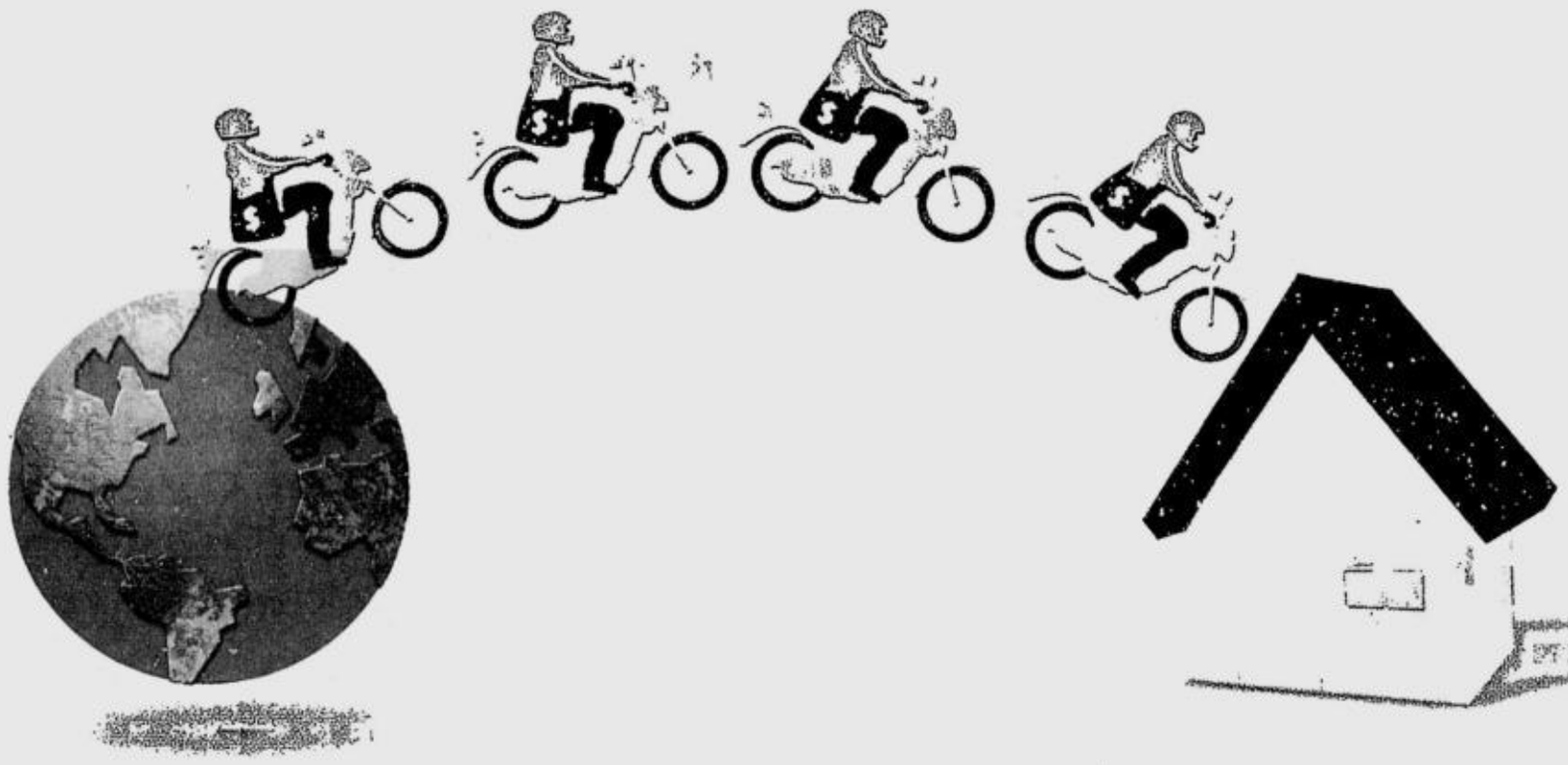
The range of PNB's products and services catering to the Global Filipino perfectly suit the lifestyle of the ones working abroad as well as their recipients.

One of the new products that will be opened especially (but not exclusively) to Global Filipinos is the **Mutual Fund**. A joint effort by PNB and Dutch banking giant ING, this lets PNB's clients graduate from just being a depositors to becoming an investor.

PNB helps Global Filipinos meet their needs, offering loans for something as basic as pocket money for their departure. But more importantly, PNB helps Global Filipinos reach their dreams. Through **Own a Philippine Home Loan**, one can borrow up to 80 percent of the selling price of the house one wishes to buy, and pay the loan for up to 20 years.

Keeping their hard-earned money safe, making sure it arrives when and where it is needed, helping them secure a brighter future, and bringing them closer to their dreams. Truly, PNB exists for the Global Filipino Family.

Ang Dollars n'ya, Pwede mo Nang hintayin sa Bahay!



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PNB Dollar Door-to-Door Delivery*

- ✓ You will receive the exact amount your loved one remits—in US Dollars.
- ✓ Remittances are sent directly to either your home or office address.
- ✓ Garantisadong darating ang padala within 24 hours.

* Initially available for Metro Manila deliveries only.

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Mas malawak na mundo. Hatid namin sa inyo.

PNB gives new meaning to Global Filipino

Philippine Independence Day Celebration at Morden, Surrey (from left) Philippine Ambassador H.E. Edgardo B. Espiritu and wife Lydia, Mayor of London Borough of Merton Councilor John Dehaney and Mayoress Audrey Dehaney, Mr. Sipat, Mr. Saunders, Ms. Teresita Juco - KASAPI Officer.

PNB's overseas branches provide the Global Filipino with a sense of home and serve as a link to their families here in the Philippines.

"Wherever there is a Global Filipino Family, there is a PNB present whether it is abroad or in the country," said Ramon Murillo, first vice president for International Banking and Overseas Remittance Sector (IBORS) for Asia, Middle East, and Oceania Region. "We try to make sure that we put ourselves where we think we are needed," he said.

Most Filipinos working abroad have families in rural or far-flung areas where PNB branches are mostly located. For the part of the Global Filipino, PNB serves as a link to home. Because they are manned by Filipinos, the branches can sometimes ease the sense of longing when talking to fellow Pinoys.

"We don't just look at what products or services are needed," said Jovencio Hernandez, first senior vice president for Consumer Finance Sector of the Philippine National Bank. "We look at what can we do for the global Filipinos and their families."

Hernandez said that PNB has a more holistic approach when it comes to servicing the Global Filipino Family. They started by creating a more meaningful tagline going from OFW to Global Filipino Family.

"We feel that it is only appropriate because of their contribution to the country and to the economy and to the development of this nation," he added.

The Consumer Financing Sector of PNB created the Own a Philippine Home Loan to allow Global Filipinos to have their own homes here in the country.

But PNB has grander plans for the Global Filipino Family. It wants an ordinary depositor to become an investor.

Ramon Lim, first senior vice president of the Treasury Sector, believes that the needs of Global Filipinos are not limited to the departure, but include the life in-between as well as their eventual homecoming.

"When we look at the Global Filipino, it's from departure to coming home," Lim said.

In the past, Global Filipinos would risk life and limb to work in a foreign country so they can provide for their families' basic needs. These days, as the economy gets stronger, the demographics of Filipinos working abroad evolves, and work opportunities are much better, the "ordinary" overseas Filipino worker is offered a wide range of services to let them grow their disposable funds. This becomes another source of income for them.

Speaking about the Mutual Fund, Lim said PNB wants its client to "graduate from just being a depositor to becoming an investor."

The Mutual Fund is a joint effort by Dutch banking giant ING and PNB which will be listed in Dublin, Ireland.

Lim also mentioned that he is considering reducing the minimum investment of the Philippine bonds to allow small investors like Global Filipinos to invest. He also feels that pension fund is another possible product that will benefit the Global Filipino.

"What we can do is educate them on the possible investment opportunities," he said.

For now, PNB continues to offer a wide variety of products with several different channels to choose from such as Internet, phone and SMS banking. But at the same time, it has been expanding its reach through unconventional channels. For instance, Global Filipinos in Hong Kong can now send remittances through a 7-Eleven branch while their families will be able to receive via any Cebuana Lhuillier branch. There is no doubt that PNB's plans for a continually evolving Global Family of Services will be well-received and valued by our Global Filipino Families.

PNB has grander plans for the Global Filipino Family. It wants an ordinary depositor to become an investor -

Patunay ng paglilingkod Namin sa Bayaning OFW.

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2. Click on the PNB Remittance Tracker link.
3. Input your Remittance Transaction Number and click on the 'submit' button.

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Maaaring gamitin sa alinmang PNB remittance service.

FRANCOISE Nicoloff with (from left) Joanne Pedrosa, Gem Mañosa and Ria Vecin

LIFESTYLE

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✔Strengthens Immune System
✔Develops Stronger Bones
✔Promotes Healthy Aging
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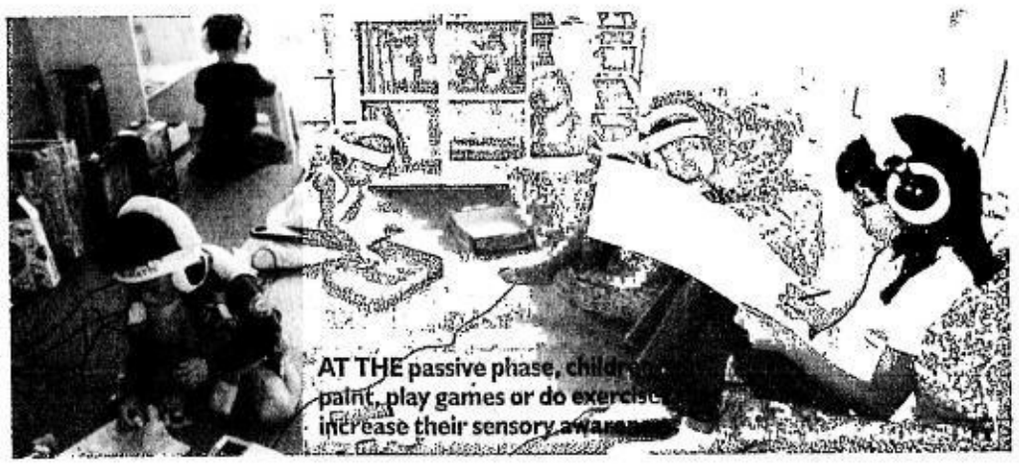
Listening as therapy



AT THE passive phase, children paint, play games or do exercises to increase their sensory awareness

The Tomatis Method uses classical music played through an 'electronic ear' to check hyperactivity and attention-deficiency

Text by Rowena C. Burgos
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

RIA VECIN'S SON, ENRIQUE, was 4 years old when his preschool teacher noticed that something was not quite right with him. He was subsequently diagnosed as having Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Vecin found out about the Tomatis Method from her mother-in-law, who lived in Barcelona, Spain. It seemed like the perfect answer for Enrique, but Vecin was dismayed that the nearest facility offering the therapy was in Australia.

"All things considered, it made more sense to take Enrique to Spain to try Tomatis, since we could stay with my mother-in-law while he was doing the therapy," Vecin said.

But now the first Tomatis Center in Southeast Asia has opened at the Ecoute Center in Alabang. The Philippine Tomatis Center is managed by Joanne Pedrosa and Vecin, with Gem Mañosa as consultant.

All Tomatis centers are professionally directed by practitioners in medicine, education, psychology, speech and language or music therapy.

Mañosa has a master's degree in Family Life and Child Development, with 15 years of teaching experience. Pedrosa and Vecin, together with Mañosa, underwent one year of intensive training with psychologist Francoise Nicoloff, director of the Australian Tomatis Method in Sydney, Australia.

The French-Australian Nicoloff, who was in town recently, is president of the International Association of Registered Tomatis Consultants.

The method introduced in 1947 by French ear, nose and throat specialist Alfred Tomatis aims to stimulate the muscles of the middle ear to enhance the development of listening, language and communication skills.

"The improved response to sound," said Nicoloff, "appears to generate improvement in a number of other areas like attention span and concentration, bodily control, eye contact, mood and spirit, as well as listening, language, confidence, self-expression, posture and energy level."

Nicoloff said the Tomatis technique also eased other conditions like brain dysfunction, autism, hyperactivity, depression, stuttering, some auditory disorders and a wide variety of learning disabilities.

"It has also helped adults heighten their attention and concentration skills and increase their productivity at work," she said.

Assessment

A client joining the Tomatis Program undergoes a listening assessment to determine his/her auditory skills and conditions. An individual program is then designed to meet the person's specific needs.

"An average program consists of a minimum of 60 hours in three block sessions. Some clients may need additional sessions," said Nicoloff.

A listening test is conducted after every 20 hours of the program to track progress. It is usually followed by a short interview or counseling session to summarize what has been achieved and to explore reactions, thoughts and feelings.

Since the influence of music on the brain and its value on a child's physical, emotional and cognitive development are now widely recognized, Tomatis clients spend two hours daily of the initial block of 10 days, listening through headphones to classical music, mostly by Mozart.

As they listen, the children play games, draw, paint and engage in other passive activities that increase sensory awareness or improve balance and coordination. Adults draw, solve puzzles, meditate, rest or sleep. In the active phase, vocal exercises are added.

Moms needed

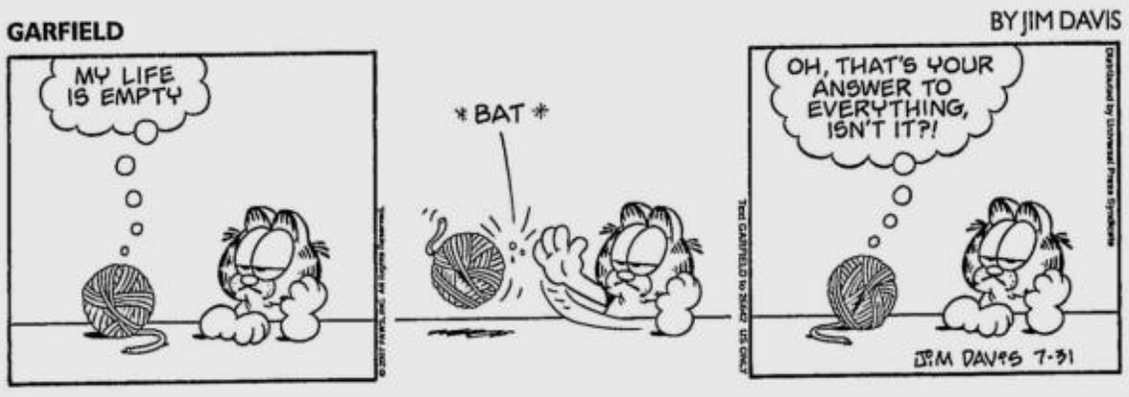
Young children undergoing the Tomatis Method should be accompanied by their mothers.

"In most cases, listening to the mother's voice is a positive experience for the child and accelerates progress, provided that the mother accompanies the child every step of the way," said Nicoloff.

The mother also has listening sessions with the Electronic Ear, a specialized equipment that accentuates and diminishes different sound frequencies, stimulating the muscles of

LISTENING/ C3

GARFIELD
BY JIM DAVIS



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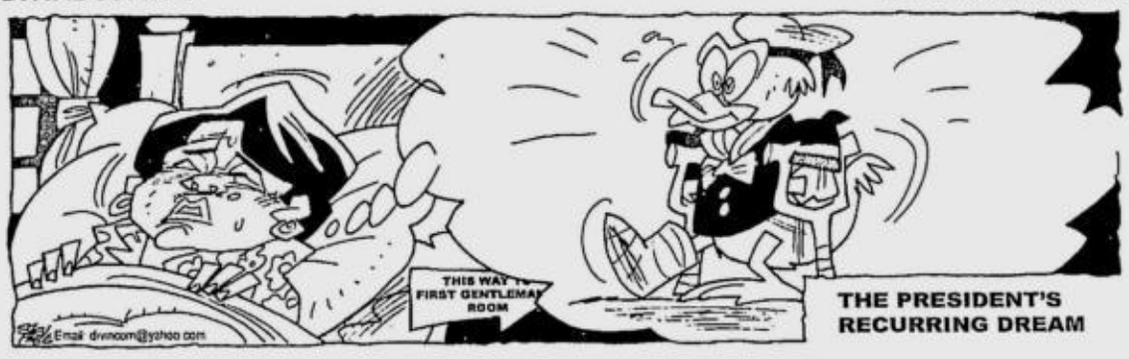
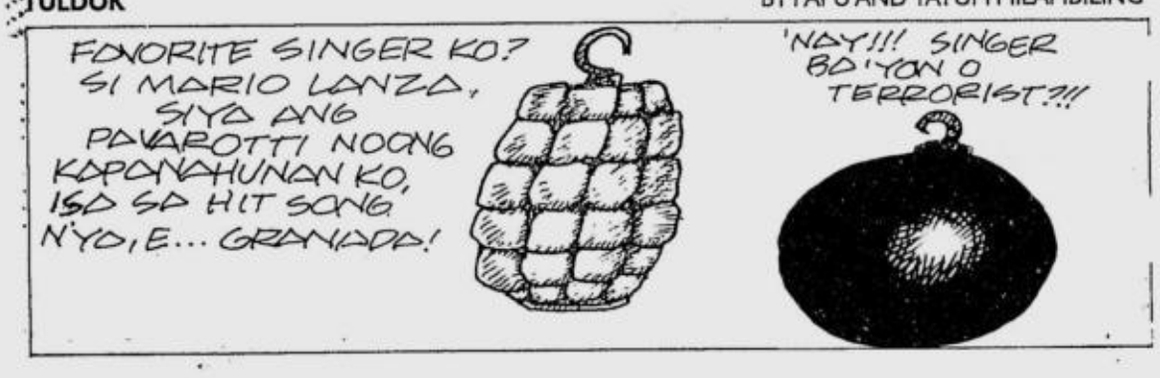
DIVINE COMEDY
BY STEVEN PABALINAS



KIKO MACHINE
BY MANIX ABRERA

MIKROKOSMOS
BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

TULDOK
BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

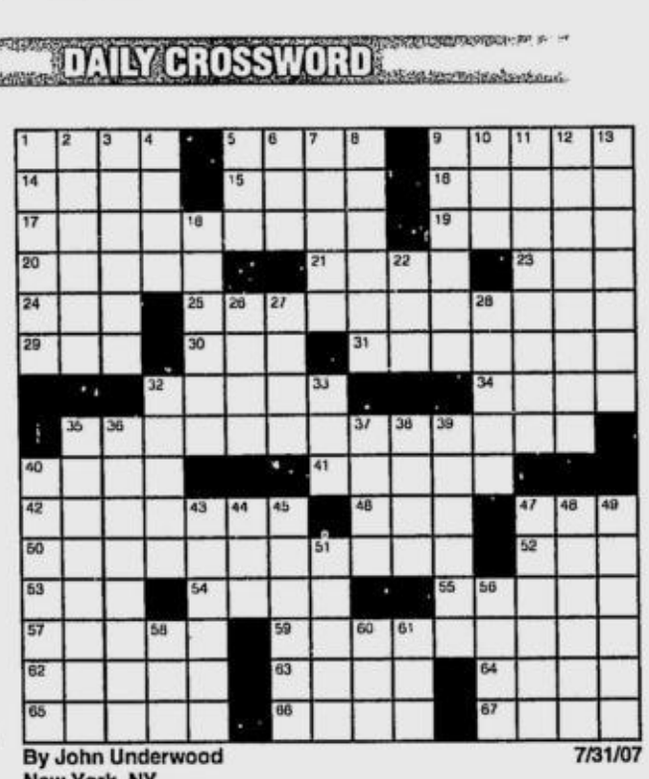


BEN
BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 MP's quarry, perhaps
5 Brainchild
9 __ Ferry, N.Y.
14 Adidas rival
15 Ring
16 Lowest deck
17 In the act
19 Long-legged wader
20 Olds model
21 Head Stone?
23 24-hr. info stn.
24 Age proofs, briefly
25 Ruddy
29 Spring fwd. system
30 Explosive initials
31 White ant
32 Gourmand
34 Super server
35 Cowardly
40 Fills the space
41 How some tuna is packed
42 Antennas
46 "Canterbury Tales" locale
47 Blond shade
50 Aristocratic
52 Pi follower
53 Mag. staffers
54 1998 Sarah McLachlan hit
55 Baylor of basketball
57 Trim some more
59 Jealous
62 Drain cover
63 Girlfriend of Dudley Do-Right
64 Ms. Fitzgerald
65 Feudal serfs
66 Ice cream brand
67 Sneakers brand

DOWN
1 Spooked
2 Handles effectively
3 Most senior
4 Bolger and Haley's co-star
5 Abdul Aziz __ Saud
6 Pop
7 Foe
8 Junkie
9 Stevedore
10 Hockey's Bobby
11 Hazardous road condition
12 Hatted, say, at Easter
13 Cash dispenser
18 Of a major artery
22 Fidel's friend
26 Not deceived by
27 Mulligan's dish
28 In-box contents
32 Borden bovine
33 Hitter's stat
35 Uncle-sayers
36 Of Rome's predecessors
37 Geraint's wife
38 __ Star State
39 Lime tree
40 Bejeweled egg maker
43 Grows less and less
44 Lawyer's deg.
45 Elegantly designed
47 Sock of diamonds
48 Policeman's badge
49 Accords, for instance
51 Moved a dinghy
56 Onion cousin
58 Shoshone
60 English cathedral city
61 High RRs



By John Underwood
New York, NY
7/31/07

Monday's Puzzle Solved

P	A	L	E		S	H	E	A	T	H		D	A	T
A	V	I	V		P	O	N	C	H	O		O	W	E
P	O	L	E	W	A	T	C	H	E	R		R	A	N
A	N	O	N	Y	M		H	E	Y		A	S	I	S
			S	A	M	B	A		R	O	T	A	T	E
A	L	B		N	E	O	N		E	V	I	L		
S	O	L		D	R	A	T	S		E	L	F	I	N
A	T	A	L	O	S	S		P	O	R	T	I	C	O
P	I	N	O	T		T	H	E	R	E		N	O	T
		K	I	T	H		E	L	B	A		N	N	E
D	E	C	R	E	E		A	L	I	G	N			
A	D	Z	E		T	O	R		T	E	A	B	A	G
T	I	E		L	E	T	T	S	E	R	V	I	C	E
E	T	C		A	R	T	H	U	R		E	D	E	N
S	H	H		G	O	O	S	E	S		L	E	S	E

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7/31/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You know how to express your marvelous imagination through your creative abilities. You're very visual; you think in pictures. You're also philosophical about life. You take your work seriously, sometimes to the point of becoming obsessive about it. This year something you've been involved with for almost a decade might end to create room for something new to enter your life.
Birthdate of: J.K Rowling, author; Wesley Snipes, actor; Dean Cain, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You might be disappointed in financial matters today. Whatever you're trying to do to earn money or to spend it is blocked by responsibilities with children, sports and vacations.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): The responsibilities of family or dealing with parents might be a burden today. Your efforts to do things are thwarted by others. Just be patient.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You're working behind the scenes to accomplish something. However, whatever you have to deal with is a bit discouraging now. You can persevere!

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Difficulties with friends or members of groups are a challenge today. Quite likely, someone will refuse to go along with your suggestions.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Your ambitions to do something important to you are blocked today, perhaps by an authority figure, a parent or a boss. Sometimes others do not see the whole picture, but you do. Nevertheless, there's nothing you can do about this today.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Be patient with delays and setbacks in travel plans or anything having to do with education, publishing, the media or medicine. The stars are just not cooperating today!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You're prepared to work very hard with what you have, as well as with the resources of others, to achieve your aims now. Nothing is too much trouble. You're just going to slog your way through!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Be extra-patient when dealing with partners and close friends today. Cooperation and harmony are tough to achieve. People are fixed in their traditional ideas. Oh well.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You can accomplish a lot today. However, do not choose glamorous activities. Instead, this is a day for steady, routine, physically challenging work.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Many of you are working hard today to make things happen with children, sports, the arts or perhaps an entertaining event. Obstacles will arise, but you can deal with them.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Conflict at home is likely today, especially with parents. Be patient and tolerant in order to maintain harmony at home. You're willing to work hard to tackle renovations and domestic tasks today.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Avoid arguments with siblings and acquaintances today. They will just go in circles. People don't agree with you, and you don't agree with them. (Yikes!)

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

	1		8	4			3	
8								9
			6		7			
6		7			8	9		
1				5				3
		4	2			1		8
			7		4			
9								7
	8			3	9		5	

Difficulty Level ★★
7/31

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

1	4	7	9	6	2	3	5	8
6	8	3	4	5	7	9	2	1
2	5	9	8	1	3	6	4	7
8	6	4	2	7	9	5	1	3
9	2	1	3	8	5	7	6	4
3	7	5	6	4	1	8	9	2
4	9	8	1	3	6	2	7	5
7	1	6	5	2	8	4	3	9
5	3	2	7	9	4	1	8	6

Difficulty Level ★

INNER AWARENESS
Jaime Licauco

Jet-setting ghost

WHEN THE FATHER OF THE LATE Prof. Anton Estrada of the Asian Institute of Management died in London, he went to the United Kingdom to bring the body home. His father was a diplomat assigned in London.

Flying home in a 747 plane, Anton's father appeared beside him. They talked like they used to when the old man was still alive. Anton had forgotten his father was dead.

The father even ordered a glass of wine from the flight attendant. Anton told me his father thanked him for arranging the return of his body. That was when he realized his father, who then disappeared, was dead.

Shortly afterwards, the flight attendant brought the glass of wine his father ordered.

"Where's the passenger who ordered two glasses of wine?" asked the flight attendant.

Anton replied he went to the rest room and gave her a very sweet smile as he got the glasses of wine.

Speaking of ghosts in an airplane, here's another story I recall.

I was coming home from California. I can't remember the date but it was in the mid-90s. Some flight attendants recognized me and asked if I could go with them to their quarters on the upper deck of the plane.

I asked why, but they merely said they felt something there. They could not rest or sleep there as they felt the presence of a spirit. They asked if a spirit could haunt an airplane. I said it was possible.

I asked if anybody who worked in that plane had died. They said one of their stewards died recently.

When I entered their quarters, I could not breathe. My chest became heavy and I was gasping for air. I could not stay too long in the place and had to get out. I told them the spirit of that steward was still there.

I asked how he died. They told me he was asthmatic and he was having difficulty breathing. No wonder I felt all the symptoms he had before he died.

I suggested to them to get a spiritist or psychic to exorcise the plane or at least help the spirit of the flight steward to ascend or elevate itself. Otherwise the crew would not be able to sleep in that place.

They thanked me as I returned to my seat and slept quietly until we landed in Manila. That was my first encounter with a ghost inside a plane!

Pinned down by a spirit

In 1986 I went to Milan, Italy, to speak at an international symposium on alternative healing.

After the symposium, the organizer, a good friend of Pope John Paul II, asked several foreign speakers, including myself, if we wanted to meet the Pope. Of course, we all said yes.

And so about 15 of us flew to Rome to meet the Pope.

We were billeted at the century-old Ambasciator Hotel in front of the American Embassy in Rome. It had one-foot thick stone walls. Though it looked old, it was well-preserved.

A strange incident happened about 10:30 in the evening, the day before we were to meet the Pope at the Vatican.

I was about to sleep when I noticed a very heavy invisible being on top of me, trying to push me down. I sensed it to be a heavy-built male spirit.

I could not move but I did not panic. I remembered that my eyes were closed all the time. I was not sure why I did not open my eyes.

I talked to it telepathically asking who he was and what he wanted. But I got no reply. He continued to pin me down.

I knew it was useless to shout for help because the walls were so thick nobody would hear me.

So, I decided to fight back. I told him mentally, "So, you want to play, *ha*? Then let's play. I won't allow you to intimidate me. I want you to get out of here right now!"

After I said that, the spirit suddenly disappeared. I was able to move. I opened my eyes and saw nobody in the room. Then I readily fell sleep.

The next day, we had a special audience with the Pope. I was able to talk to him face to face for a few precious minutes. I gave him a copy of the German edition of my book on the Faith Healers of the Philippines.

The Pope told me, "Faith is what we need most in the world today."

When I told him I came from the Philippines, his face lit up. He smiled and came towards me although several others were trying to catch his attention. I cannot imagine that my book is now in the Vatican Library.

I have had several more encounters with the paranormal and supernatural in different hotels, offices, elevators and factories. But I better stop here before I scare you that you do not report for work anymore!

PINOY MOM MODEL FOR BREASTFEEDING

The Philippines will join over 180 countries worldwide in marking World Breastfeeding Week starting tomorrow.

To launch this year's event, the Department of Health named recently INQUIRER columnist Tessa Prieto Valdes "Idol sa Breastfeeding." She is the first "mom model for exclusive breastfeeding in the Philippines," according to Health Secretary Francisco T. Duque III.

During simple ceremonies to announce Valdes' selection as mom model, the secretary said the week-long observance would be "highlighting the primacy and urgency of the initiation of breastfeeding within the first hour of birth and continuing up to six months as the most crucial step in ensuring child health and survival."

Listening as therapy

From page C1

A CHILD'S auditory skills and condition are assessed.

THE ELECTRONIC Ear is an ear trainer using Mozart's music.

the ears to improve their response to a wide range of sound frequencies.

"These will not only help her relax but will also help her and the child accept the behavioral changes brought about by the program," Nicoloff said.

She added that the Tomatis Method worked very well with occupational therapy, sensory integration, speech therapy and other natural therapies.

But while the Tomatis was a significant breakthrough for listening-based language, learning, and behavior problems, Nicoloff said it was not a cure-all.

And many people wanting to avail of the program might also find its cost rather steep, P5,000 just for initial assessment.

Still, in a study by Canada's Toronto Center, some 95 percent of parents of over 400 children and adolescents who underwent the Tomatis reported improvements in their children's voice quality, concentration, comprehension, ability to communicate, reading skill, oral and written expression, motor skills, speed, punctuality, sense of rhythm, self-reliance and general behavior.

Vecin herself says, "(Though) there are days when we experience some regression (in) his behavior ... always ... son would bounce back and we would notice again days of progression afterwards. I highly recommend the Tomatis Method for children with behavioral or learning difficulties. Seeing your child flourish and bloom in a most positive way is an irreplaceable and gratifying gift that will benefit not only your child and yourself but everyone in the family as well."

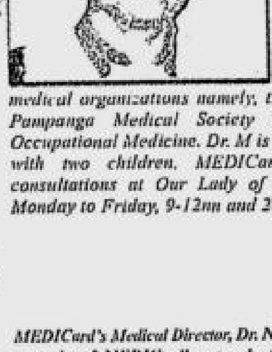
The Philippine Tomatis Center (771-2046; cell phone 0917-3296979; website www.tomatis.com.ph) is at Ecoute Center, 5F Mapfre/Insular Building, Acacia Avenue, Madrigal Business Park, Alabang.

MEDICard The Healthcare I Deserve!

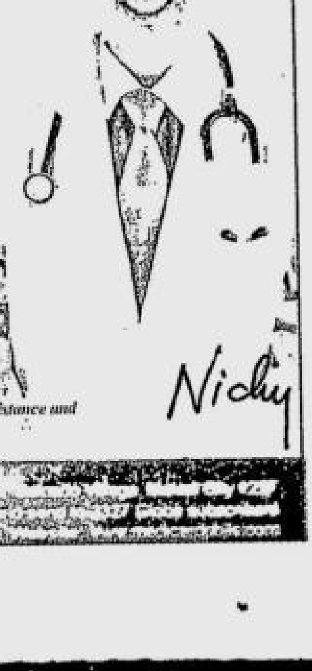
Take Charge Doc!

Is there a good substitute for meat?

Yes, "Tofu" also known as Soya curd which is rich in both high quality protein and B-vitamins. Tofu is also known for its extraordinary nutritional benefits as well as its versatility. It contains a lot of calcium which prevents osteoporosis; a disease associated with reduced bone density and increased bone fractures. Tofu is easy to digest because the soybean fiber is removed during the manufacturing process. As in most other soy food, it reduces the level of "bad" cholesterol thus reducing the risk of heart disease. In many vegetarian recipes, tofu is the best substitute for protein rich food. It contains isoflavones which lowers the incidence rate of breast and prostate cancer and reduces menopausal syndrome including mood swings and hot flushes.



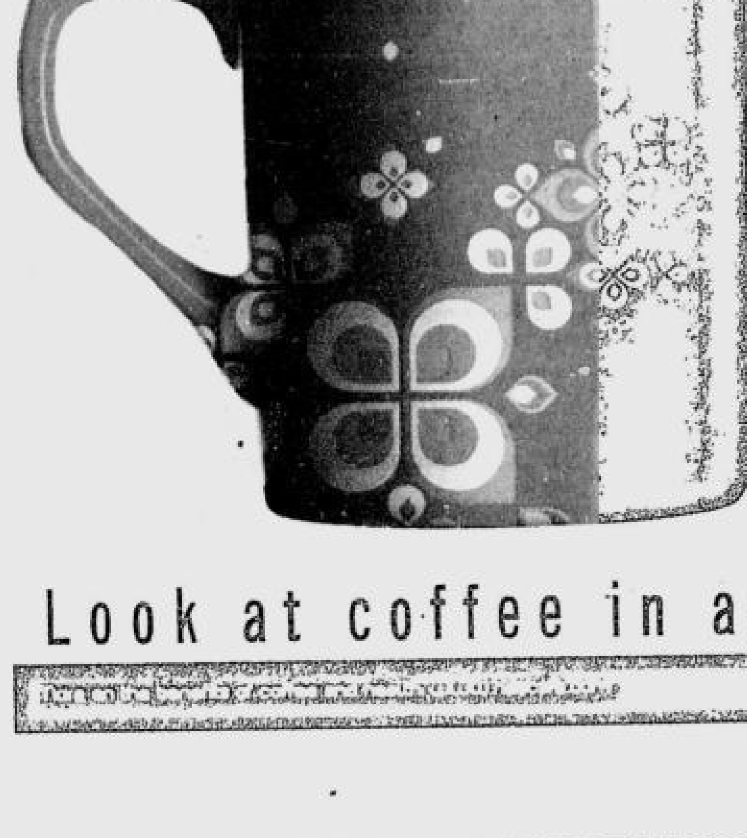
This week's answer to our feature question is brought to you by our coordinator in Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Medical Center and Mother Teresa of Calcutta Medical Center, Dr. Joseph Diaz-Manlutac. Dr. M, as he is commonly address by his patient, is a Medicine graduate of Angeles University Foundation. He specializes in Family Medicine/Occupational Medicine. He is affiliated with several medical organizations namely, the Philippine Medical Association, Pampanga Medical Society and the Philippine College of Occupational Medicine. Dr. M is married to Dr. Evelyn and is blessed with two children. MEDICard members may visit him for consultations at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Medical Center from Monday to Friday, 9-12nn and 2-5 pm.



MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

Beauty
is in the Eye of the
Coffee Lover

Yup. You read it right. Antioxidants are the hottest news in beauty since, well, the invention of the compact. No one can deny that they are now part of countless beauty products and regimens (thank you nerds!). For those clueless to the world of antioxidants, here's a refresher. Antioxidants are nature's way of fighting free radicals. The latter are molecules that mess up the good cells. So, in terms of beauty, free radicals mess up your skin and antioxidants help protect your body from the effects of free radicals. Now, the good part, antioxidants are abundant in fruits, vegetables, and coffee. Yes. Coffee. A hot cup of bliss when you're curled up with your favorite book or when you're gossiping with your girlfriends. Research shows that coffee has more antioxidants than green tea! Imagine what that could do for your body! Imagine how much you'll save on make-up purchases! So go ahead and enjoy that hot cup of NESCAFÉ. There's no better way to be beautiful than to do it from within!



Look at coffee in a different way

NESCAFÉ

HAVAIANAS' Anne Arcenas, Jackie Antonio and Abba Nappa

NICA Mendez and Helena Belmonte with 32 McKinley's Czarina Ledesma

BEAUTIFUL PACK. Miko Palanca, Helena Belmonte, Paolo Araneta, Gabbie Reyes, and newlyweds Georgia and Armand del Rosario

CARMINA Sanchez, Tara Tambunting, Tina Daniac and Divine Lee

New triumvirate's breakthrough art contest

ALL ROADS LED ONE RECENT evening to a unique, exclusive venue, 32 McKinley, Forbes Park, when marketing triumvirate Shu-Moto-Globe (Shu Uemura, Motorola, Globe Platinum) launched the Breakthrough Design Art Competition, together with Metro Magazine.

The partnership's project aims to bring "awareness and excitement toward beauty, mobile phones and communications," dahlings.

Needless to say the sprawling mansion was packed with stylish urbanites who participated symbolically in the creation of the black iron sculpture "Breakthrough" of renowned sculptor, writer and designer **Ovvian Castrillo.**

"The participation of the guests in creating the sculpture signifies the importance of the dynamics between all parties involved," said a statement from the hosts.

The one-of-a-kind contest encourages people to showcase their works, representing ideas drawn from the beauty, telecommunications, retail and media industries, in the multifaceted venue, *palanggas*.

The winning artwork should best exemplify the breakthrough concept with the Shu-Moto-Globe in mind. Some P500,000 worth of prizes and PR exposure await the winning artist.

Circulating among the guests were namedroppables like **Noel Oñate; Mike Toledo; Juliet** and **Mimi Tan** and **Lulu Tan Gan; Puey Quinones; Chut Cuerva; Orange Aberin;** gorgeous eye-catchers **Angelu de Leon, Faith Amigo** and **Carol Garcia;** plus tons of others like them, *palanggas*.

Best-dressed guests were **Ruby Gan, Celine Lopez, Priscilla Mereilles, Jenni Epperson, Divine Lee, Carmina Sanchez, Tara Tambunting, Helena Belmonte, Nica Mendez, Happy David, JR Isaac** and **Georgia Schulze-del Rosario** who were given Motorola KRZR K3 phones and Shu Uemura's "emblematic" product, High Performance Cleansing Oil.

Drinks from Premier Wine, Alize and 3 Vodka endlessly flowed complementing Zen Restaurant's Japanese fare and **Mary Ann Tinio**'s new Italian offerings.

It was, indeed, an evening of great fun.

Aside from Shu Uemura, Motorola, Globe Platinum and Metro Magazine, the Breakthrough Design Art Competition is also supported by Alize and 3 Vodka.

More info? Visit breakthroughdesign.com.ph.

HOTSHOTS. Shu-Moto-Globe-Metro Breakthrough team of Tessa Dragon, Cynthia Mangahas, Coco Domingo, Tina Tinio, Mel Cuevas and Mari Litonjua

BREAK-THROUGH sculptor Ovvian Castrillo

SUPER PALS Toni Leviste and Rep. Carissa Coscolluela

NUVO'S Louie Ysmael and 3 Vodka's Spencer Ty

MOI and L'Oreal Philippines' country manager Luc Olivier Marquet

ASIAN Spirit's Noel Oñate and Weber Shandwick Worldwide's Mike Toledo

HONOREE Tetta Agustin

LOUIE Cruz, fab dinner host

CHEF Mike Sandro Rieta

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

lifestyle magazine "for the modern Filipino man" was launched at the BMW Pavilion, Bonifacio Global City.

The hotshot personas running this cutting-edge publication are editor in chief **José Mari Ugarte**; creative director **Miguel Mari**; editorial producer **Jay Pou**; sub-editor **Carmela Lopa**; and **Katrina Tuason Cruz**, marketing director. **Maria Cristina Cardenas Zobel** is publisher, no less.

The event was hosted by tour guide extraordinaire **Carlos Celdran**, who introduced the invitees to the different artistic activities taking place at various corners of the BMW Pavilion, *palanggas*.

I was told by the mag's marketing director Katrina T. C. that "Rogue is designed to stoke the diverse passions of intellectually curious and socially aware men by telling stories that are rife with energy, insight, style and humor."

After we were entertained with a live musical gig, DJ performances by Caliph8 and Cardinal Zen followed. Tabaqueria de Filipinos had its own room where cigars were rolled on the spot for guests. Now, that's something different, *palanggas*.

The happening was supported by BMW, XFM, NU 107, MTV Philippines, Rustan's, BPI Cards and Bacardi, among others, *palanggas*.

Tetta is back

A *tres* intimate dinner was hosted by that man for all seasons, executive editor of Dragon magazine **Louie Cruz**, for his super close pal **Tetta Agustin** and her gorgeous daughter **Tosca** who jet in and out of the country countless times, dahlings.

Tetta was definitely the very first Filipino woman to plant our flag in Paris, back when the City of Lights still seemed so very far away. New York and San Francisco were the places to go to venture into a new life, not Paris because of the language barrier.

Tetta became the favorite in-house model of top French designer Givenchy who, by the way, is godfather to her daughter. Being close to Givenchy, who she still fondly calls "papa," she had the opportunity to meet duchesses, baronesses and other European royals.

The couture gowns she modeled in the atelier of Givenchy were seen the next day on the cover of every glossy European glamour magazine worn by **Audrey Hepburn**, another favorite model of Givenchy.

Tetta was invited to exclusive parties and even gained entry to the political circle of former French president Giscard d'Estaing.

During summer in Europe, *moi* had an open invitation to join her in her yacht in St. Tropez for a Mediterranean cruise. Her travels now take her to Belgium, Paris, London, Switzerland, Florida and *Manille, palanggas*.

For dinner that evening, Louie prepared his friend's favorite dish, *mechado*, using the recipe of my *palangga*, the late **Tita Lucy Cruz**, and his own specialty *beef kaldereta*.

The mouth-watering crispy and paper-thin pizza that **Mike Sandro Rieta** did was excellent. Giveaways for the fun affair were Sanuk, the latest sandals for sidewalk surfers.

The evening reminded me of the many unforgettable fun years *moi* spent with Tetta and the **JV Cruz** *famille* in Europe.

Breaking new ground

A new baby has joined the magazine *famille*, dahlings. Simply called Rogue, the chic literary

Bellevue bash

It was hot and wild, *palanggas*, the party for more than 300 personas hosted by the popular Bellevue Hotel in way uptown Alabang. Held at the hotel's Grand Ballroom, the roaring bash featured the hottest musical group, The Bloomfields, that dished out rocking and swinging '60s and '70s music by The Beatles, The Beach Boys and others.

Premium items from hot sponsors Smart Infinity, Future Trade International and Philippine Wine Merchants were raffled off. As always, dahlings, everyone had a smashing good time, thanks to the amazing **Chan** brothers—Bellevue GM **Patrick** and marketing and communications director **Ryan**, *palanggas*.

ROGUE editor in chief José Mari Ugarte among gorgeous women

BMW's popular couple Lito and Ditas German

BELLEVUE'S Ryan Chan, Keith and Vivian Chen, and Debbie Chan

INSIDE OUT
Cory Quirino

Be 10 years younger

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

IF PEOPLE APPROACH YOU ON THE street and compliment you on your youthful looks, they are merely affirming what you may already know for yourself—that whatever it is you are doing, works!

But it does not end there. The story continues. At some point, after all the compliments, the questions begin.

What is your secret? Will you share it with us? Will you teach us how?

Getting started

In the search for the regimen that best suits you, your lifestyle has to be taken into account. If you are…

Sedentary—A stay-at-home person with not much activity except supervision of the home and family can find plenty of time to devote to an active program.

So, take a look at your schedule and set aside at least one hour a day for a visit to a gym or to enroll in dance class, yoga, pilates. If you wish to have private classes at home, there are personal trainers who can visit you.

Active—Career people often have to find time during their lunch break to visit a gym. While this may seem inconvenient at first, you will find it more comfortable for you as you go along. Promise.

Driven—There are people who are so driven that stress is their adrenaline. If you are one of those people, day-to-day pressure is familiar territory for you that, once removed from the regimen, you step out of your comfort zone.

The best prescription here is to find time at the end of the workday for light exercise and relaxation.

Pointers for age reversal

1. Detoxify the body—Make a list of all the things you do that you already know are not good for you like drowning yourself in alcohol, nonstop smoking, eating beyond your limit, sleeping later and later each night, downing too many pills (medication of any kind), bingeing on sweets.

Start cutting back on these bad habits. Better yet, try to break the habit today. Replace cravings with vegetables, fruits, herbal teas, nuts and grain.

2. Unload the mind—When your mind is constantly bombarded with worry, it goes on overload. A mind constantly fed with problems, fears, anxieties will also weigh down your own body.

3. Try to relax—Adopting a more positive attitude will instantly signal your body to be in a state of ease. Enroll in meditation classes. Or do mind-body exercises like Taichi or Qigong.

Meditation: Close your eyes. Imagine you are watching the sea, following the tides roll in and out. Feel at peace.

Catch your breath

No. Don't hold your breath. Catch it. When you are in a hurry, you tend to breathe faster and take shallow breaths. This hastens oxidation in the body. Thus, it speeds up aging. Got it?

If you stop rushing through the day, you will be kinder to your heart.

Right now, do this: Breathe in, breathe out in slow counts of five. Keep practicing until it feels so natural to you. Now, smile. And keep smiling throughout the day and night.

Pampering tips

1. Go to a dermatologist. Have a facial and body scrub. If this is expensive for you, you can do it at home. Standard scrubs can use sugar or raw oatmeal—2 tbsp mixed with 1 tbsp virgin coconut or olive oil. Gently rub your body. A weekly ritual ought to give your skin its luster.

2. Always have a bottle of water by your side. Sip whenever you can. This will rehydrate your skin.

3. Avoid touching your face with your hands. Always use a tissue or cotton balls. If you have to touch your face, wash your hands first.

Affirmation

"I am ageless."

Love and light!

"Celebrate Life With Cory Quirino" is on Aug. 18, 2-5 p.m., at SM Sucat. Free admission.

ENTERTAINMENT

Website: www.inquirer.net/entertainment

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

sms feedback: Inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart)
or email us at entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

TUVA THROAT SINGERS

Penang World Music Fest a success

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

I GOT BURNT OUT WITH ALL the show biz controversies that hounded me the past weeks. That's why it was such a welcome break to cover the Penang World Music Festival in Malaysia. There's nothing like good music to soothe frayed nerves.

The fest was held from July 20 to 22 at the Taman Kuari garden, left of the famous Taman Botani, amid lush trees and tropical foliage.

The venue was packed with jammers who were enthralled with the performances of bands from all corners of the globe—Solomon Islands, Afghanistan, Italy, USA, South Africa, Tuva, Russia, Singapore, Malaysia, Peru, United Kingdom, Burkina, Faso and more.

Not even an unexpected downpour could stop the crowd of various nationalities from partying. The bands showcased their ethnic music with their own native instruments.

Hopefully next year, we can send the likes of **Grace Nono, Joey Ayala** and Pinikpikan to this music fest to show the world how rich and vast Philippine music is. Pinoy bands dominate the hotel circuit abroad. It's time we conquered the ethnic music scene as well.

Penang aims to be known as Asia's music capital. With the astounding success of their 1st World Musicfest (which will be an annual event), they are certainly moving in that direction. Kudos to Tourism Malaysia, Penang Tourism Action Council and Sarawak Tourism Board for their all-out support to musicians in transforming community music into international standard stage performance.

New music

AMONG all the artists, I was mesmerized with the unusual kind of music by the Tuva Throat singers. (Tuva is the border within the Siberia/ Mongolian region). They use overtones heard in new music, applied to voices.

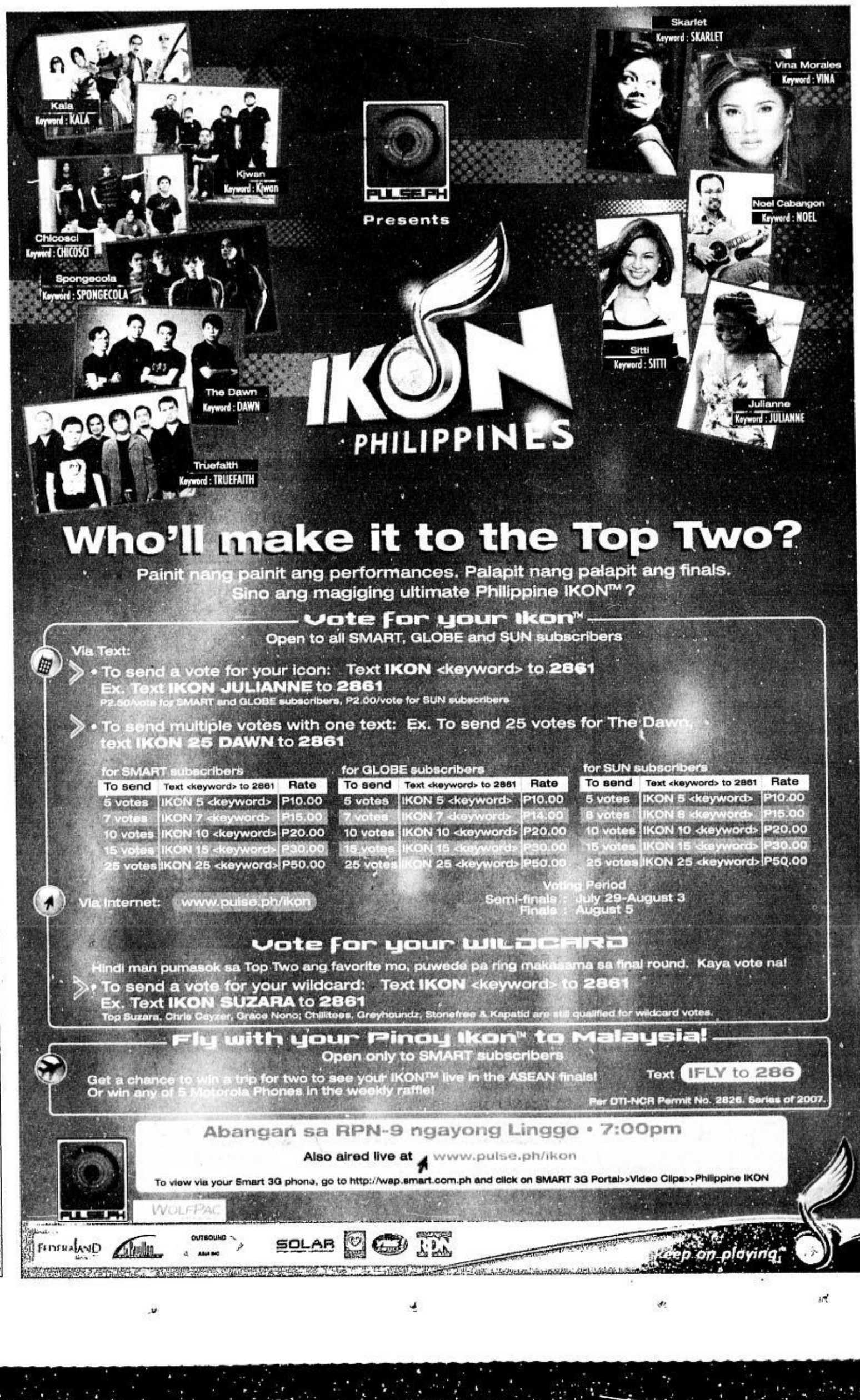
It's a deep humming groan mixed with a high pitched whistling sound. Sometimes, three voices are heard in one person's singing. To do this, they say, one's inner spiritual voice must be strong. Usually, it's done a capella by a single person (but a singer may sound like a whole group). I had heard nothing like it before.

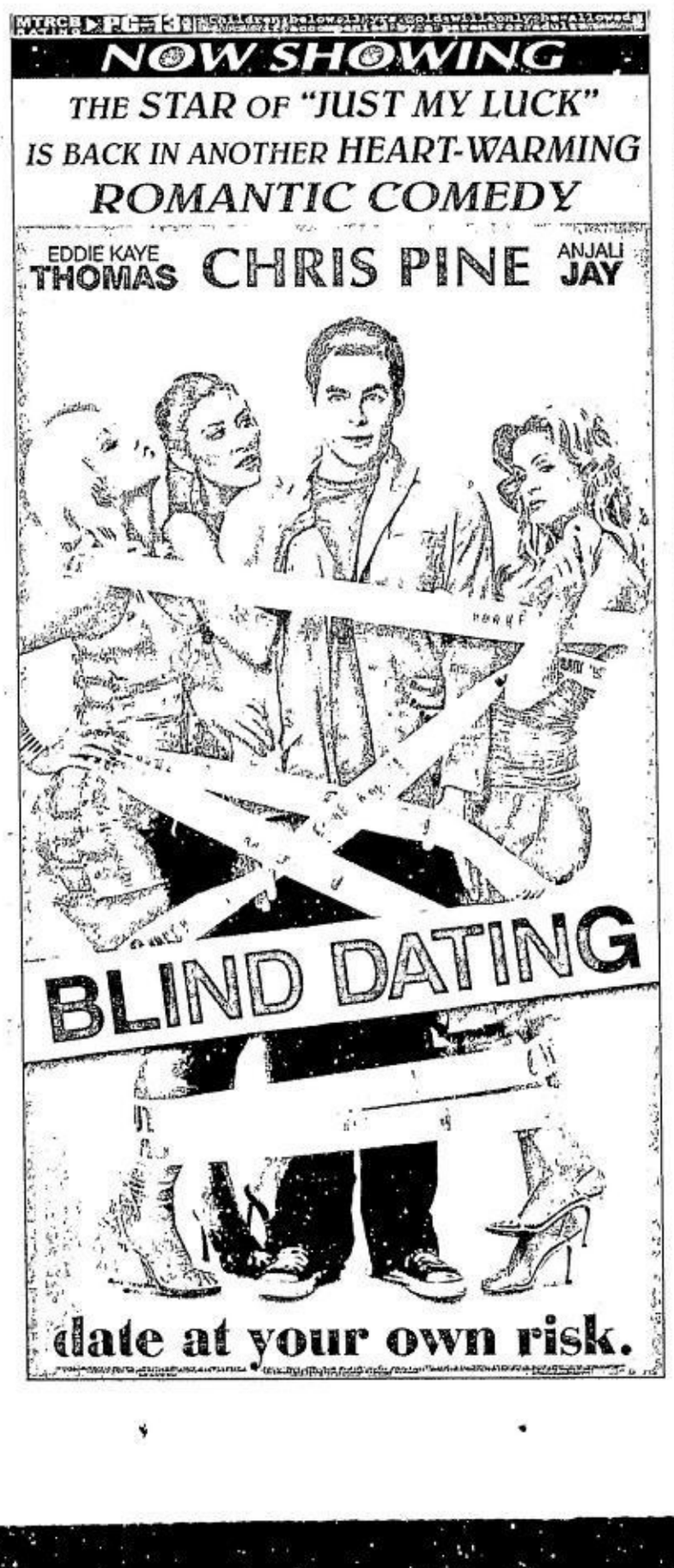
Penang also boasts of being a favorite location for international films. The 1992 Academy award winning French film "Indochine" (starring **Catherine Deneuve**) was shot in Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion. It is one of two surviving examples of grandiose architecture, imitating the opulence of the Ching dynasty. **Mother Lily** ought to shoot the next "Mano Po" there.

Another movie, "Anna & the King" (1999), had the Khoo Kongsi Clan House as its setting. Lead star **Jodie Foster** was very impressed with the place, based on the glowing remarks she wrote on the guest book. She even bought some prints showing the intricately designed temple.

I was delighted to see the teaser of **Alfred Vargas'** teleserye "Muli"

PENANG/ D2





MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION
MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

Cineplex

1	RATATOUILLE
2	THE SIMPSONS
3	RATATOUILLE
4	THE SIMPSONS 4.04.04.0

PREMIERE

HARRY POTTER - 5

Masagana Cinema
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1	OUIJA
2	RATATOUILLE
3	HARRY POTTER - 5

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)

1	THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
2	RATATOUILLE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1	RATATOUILLE
2	OUIJA
3	THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
4	HARRY POTTER - 5

Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216

1	RATATOUILLE
2	THE SIMPSONS
3	OUIJA
4	HARRY POTTER - 5

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	DIE HARD 4.0
2	TRANSFORMERS

Eastwood Cinemas
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6163 or 72

1	RATATOUILLE
2	THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
3	RATATOUILLE
4	HARRY POTTER - 5

Starmall EDSA SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266160

3	RATATOUILLE
4	OUIJA
5	RESERVED

Metropolis Star Cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 6433994

1	RATATOUILLE
2	OUIJA
3	HARRY POTTER - 5
4	PLANET TERROR

Cinema 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
2	OUIJA
3	RATATOUILLE
4	

SM Theatres
SM Pacific Mall Lucena, telephone no (042) 660-3025

1	HARRY POTTER - 5
2	VACANCY
3	OUIJA

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146

1	RESERVED
2	RESERVED
3	RESERVED
4	RESERVED

Pacific Mall Lucena Cinemagic
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel. (042) 660-5271

1	OUIJA
2	THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
3	RESERVED
4	RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	VACANCY
2	OUIJA
3	HARRY POTTER - 5

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1	VACANCY
2	OUIJA
3	TRANSFORMERS
4	HARRY POTTER - 5

Filinvest Festival Cinema
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1	HARRY POTTER - 5
2	RATATOUILLE
3	THE SIMPSONS
4	HARRY POTTER - 5
5	DIE HARD 4.0
6	TRANSFORMERS
7	RATATOUILLE
8	OUIJA
9	VACANCY
10	BLIND DATING

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320

1	HARRY POTTER - 5
2	OUIJA
3	RATATOUILLE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736

1	HARRY POTTER - 5
2	OUIJA

Llanas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748

1	DIE HARD 4.0
2	28 WEEKS LATER

Blue Wave Marikina
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927

1	OUIJA
2	THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
3	RATATOUILLE
4	HARRY POTTER - 5

Llanas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1	HARRY POTTER - 5
2	KRISANTA
3	PLANET TERROR
4	DIE HARD 4.0

Llanas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1	RATATOUILLE
2	OUIJA
3	THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
4	MATAMIS HANGANG DULO
5	HARRY POTTER - 5

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228

1	RATATOUILLE
2	THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
3	OUIJA
4	BLIND DATING
5	HARRY POTTER - 5

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	CAPE KARMA
2	RATATOUILLE
3	VACANCY
4	OUIJA

Marketplace
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	OUIJA
2	HARRY POTTER - 5
3	VACANCY
4	TRANSFORMERS

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	KARELASYON
2	KAKAIBANG KARISMA

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

MOVIEWORLD

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALLERIA
Ticket Price THX: P160 130 Indie Sine: 100 632-9118

1 HARRY POTTER 5 • THX
1:30 4:10 6:50

2 OUIJA
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

3 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
11:00 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

4 DIE HARD 4
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

5 RATATOUILLE
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

6 HARRY POTTER 5
11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00

7 BLIND DATING
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

8 indieSine: HANGGANG DITO NA LAMANG.
1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30

9 TRANSFORMERS
1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00

10 VACANCY
1:30 3:35 5:40 7:45 9:50

R-18! APPROVED WITHOUT CUTS!

Felino Tañada's
HANGGANG DITO NA LAMANG at MARAMING SALAMAT PO

This is the film adaptation of Orlando Nadres' breakthrough play about homosexuality, starring *Nonie Buencamino* as a repressed pawnshop owner, *Jon Santos*, as the town's beautician, and *Jerwin Mercado* as the man that will change their lives forever.

Robinsons Movieworld Galleria indieSine *showing on July 25 to 31*

ERMITA
Ticket Price: P110 / P120

1 OUIJA
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

2 DIE HARD 4
11:00 1:45 4:30, 7:15 10:00

3 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00

4 RATATOUILLE
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

5 BLIND DATING
12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 10:00

6 TRANSFORMERS
11:00MF 1:35 4:10 6:50 10:00

7 HARRY POTTER 5
11:00MF 1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00

Meet and Greet the cast

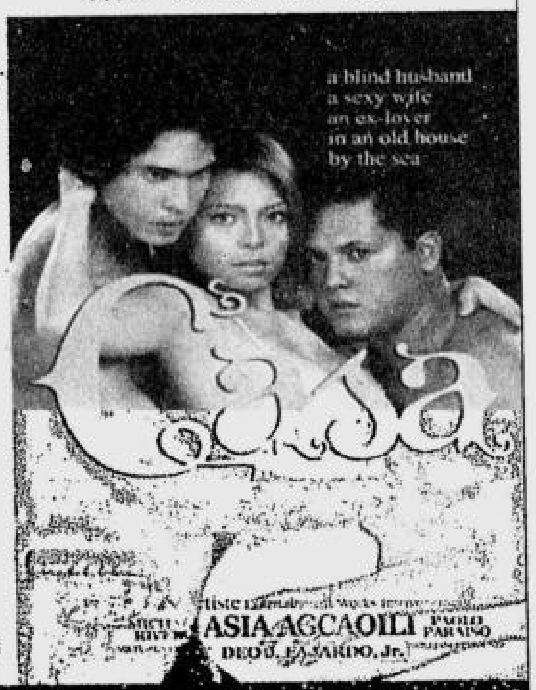
Asia Agcaoili • Paolo Paraiso • Michael Rivero

AUGUST 01

Robinsons Movieworld ERMITA
4th level Cinema Lobby
3:30PM

GALLERIA
4th level Cinema Lobby
5:30PM

OPENS August 01
MTRCB Rating: R18



METRO EAST
Ticket Price: P100 / P110 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 TRANSFORMERS
12:00MF 3:00 6:00 9:00

2 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10

3 RATATOUILLE
10:45 1:20 3:55 6:30 9:05

4 BLIND DATING
12:05 2:15 4:25 6:35 9:00

5 DIE HARD 4
12:45 3:30 6:15 9:00

6 VACANCY
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

7 HARRY POTTER 5
11:00 1:35 4:10 6:45 9:20

8 OUIJA
12:10 2:25 4:40 6:55 9:10

NOVALICHES
Ticket Price: P90 / P100 935-3231 / 936-3229-30

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 RATATOUILLE
3 OUIJA
4 TRANSFORMERS
5 DIE HARD 4
6 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE

PIONEER
Ticket Price: P100 / P110 687-6378

1 OUIJA
1:10MF 3:35 6:00 8:25

2 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
12:05MF 2:15 4:25 6:35 8:40

3 RATATOUILLE
1:15MF 3:45 6:15 8:40

4 BLIND DATING
12:05 2:15 4:25 6:35 8:40

STA. ROSA
Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (049) 837-0907

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
3 CAPE KARMA
4 RATATOUILLE
5 OUIJA

LIPA
Ticket Price: P90 (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 RATATTOUILLE
2 OUIJA
3 HARRY POTTER 5
4 CAPE KARMA
5 VACANCY

DASMARIÑAS
Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (046) 416-4332

1 CAPE KARMA
2 RATATOUILLE
3 OUIJA
4 HARRY POTTER 5
5 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE

IMUS
Ticket Price: P100 (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8186

1 WHITE NOISE 2
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 PLANET TERROR
4 RATATOUILLE
5 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
6 OUIJA

ANGELES
Ticket Price: P 90 / P95 (045) 892-2348

1 RATATOUILLE
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 OUIJA
4 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE

TARLAC

1 OUIJA
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 VACANCY

STARMILLS
Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (045) 875-1927

1 RATATOUILLE
2 DIE HARD 4
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 OUIJA
5 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
6 HARRY POTTER 5

BACOLOD
Ticket Price: P70 (034) 441-0459

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
3 OUIJA
4 RATATOUILLE
5 RESERVE
6 PAN'S LABYRINTH

ILOILO
Ticket Price: P70.50 / P80.50 (033) 336-8070

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 OUIJA
3 RATATOUILLE
4 THE SIMPSONS MOVIE
5 ZODIAC
6 TRANSFORMERS

'Man of the Year'

"MAN OF THE YEAR," A COMEdy about a man driven to the Oval Office by a sheer stroke of (bad) luck, is now available on VCD and DVD (Magnavision Home Video).

It stars Robin Williams as bitter performer Tom Dobbs who has made his career out of skewering politicians and speaking the mind of the exasperated nation on his talk show.

Also in the cast are Laura Linney, Jeff Goldblum, Tina Fey, Amy Poehler and Christopher Walken.

POWER PLANT CINEMA
ROCKWELL CENTER, MAKATI TEL: 898-1440/41 DOLBY DIGITAL

HARRY POTTER AND THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX G 1:00,4:00,7:00,10:00	THE SIMPSONS MOVIE – PG 13 12:30,2:30, 4:30,6:30,8:30	THE SIMPSONS MOVIE – PG13 1:30,3:30, 5:30,7:30,9:30
RATATOUILLE – G 1:30,4:00,6:30,9:00	BLIND DATING – PG13 1:30,3:40, 5:50,8:00,10:10	RATATOUILLE – G 12:00,2:30,5:00, 7:30,10:00

MOVIES & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 RATATOUILLE
MTRCB: GP
1:30, 4:10

2 THE SIMPSONS
MTRCB PG-13 12:00
2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

3 RATATOUILLE
MTRCB GP
1:00, 3:40, 6:20, 9:00

4 THE SIMPSONS
MTRCB: PG-13
2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30

PREMIERE THEATRE: HARRY POTTER:5 (GP) 1:00, 4:00; RATATOUILLE (GP) 6.50, 9.30

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice.

Catch the Cineplex Special

Come to Shangri-La Plaza's Season-Ender sale. Enjoy discounts of up to 70% OFF from participating stores up to July 31. See you at the Shang!

6th floor, Shangri-La Plaza Mall
EDSA corner Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City
Call 633-7851, loc. 171/ 170 or 633-2227 for more details

Shangri-La Plaza

GREENHILLS CINEMAS
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA

THEATRE-MALL GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1 — QUIJA
10:30, 12:50, 3:10
5:30, 7:50, 10:10
PG - 13

CINEMA 2 — BLIND DATING
11:00, 1:20, 3:40,
6:00, 8:20, 10:35
PG-13

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND EX

PROMENADE GREENHILLS
...a dinetertainment for all!
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 3 — RATATOUILLE
11:00, 1:45, 4:30,
7:15, 10:00
GP

CINEMA 4 — HARRY POTTER
10:40, 1:30,
4:20, 7:10, 10:00
GP

CINEMA 5 — THE SIMPSONS
10:35, 12:50, 3:05,
5:20, 7:35, 9:50
GP

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

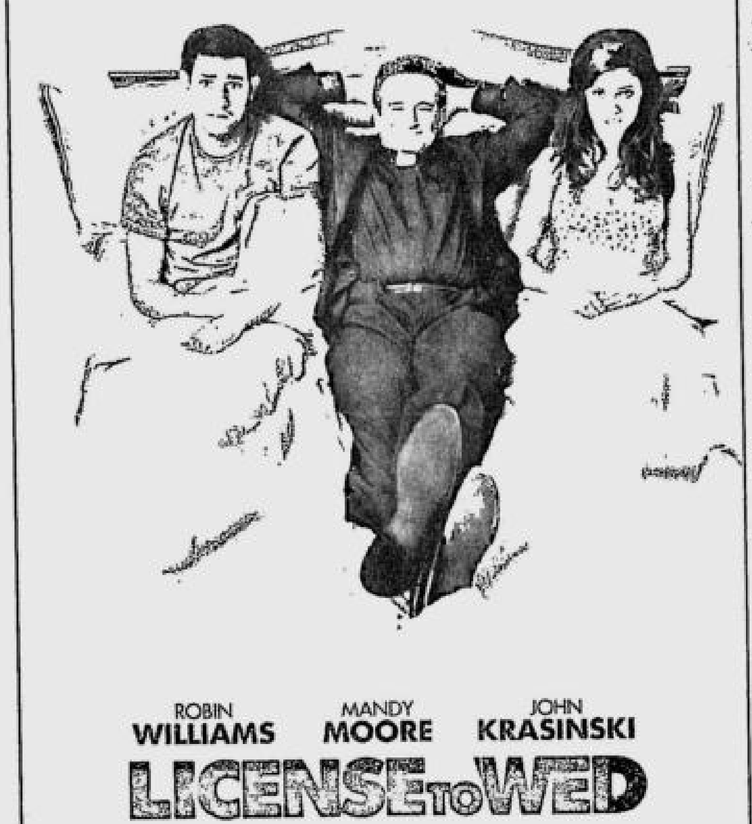
MUSIC MUSEUM	July 27, 2007	Willie Nep "Feelin Las Vegas"	8:30 PM
		The Repeat	
	August 03 & 04, 2007	Joey Albert	8:30 PM
	August 24 & 25, 2007	Ogie Alcasid & Regine Velasquez	8:00 PM
TEATRINO PROMENADE GREENHILLS	July 13, 20, 27, 2007	Drag - Ons	10:00 PM
	August 8-9, 15-16, 22-23, 29-30	Cerrudo Classico	8:00 PM

FOR INQUIRIES PLS. CALL 722-4532 LOC 116

OPENS TOMORROW

MTRCB PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

First came love... then came Reverend Frank.



ROBIN WILLIAMS MANDY MOORE JOHN KRASINSKI

LICENSE TO WED

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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

eamgirls'

reamgirls" tells the story of women who form a promising ng trio, The Dreamettes.

though the girls lose their first or fame, their talent attracts an tious manager, Curtis Taylor ie Foxx), who move the girls back-up singers of superstar s. Thun- Early (Ed- Murphy) to stars on own.

ie film Beyonce vies, Jen- Hudson, Anika Noni Rose and ny Glover.

NOW ON DISC

e Good Shepherd'

he Good Shepherd" is the story ward Wilson (Matt Damon), a nt at Yale who is recruited to the secret society Skull and s—a brotherhood and breed- round for future world leaders. e develops into one of the CIA's an operatives.

ngelina Jolie and Robert De also star.

tch and Release'

er the sudden death of her fi- Gray Wheeler (Jennifer Gar- finds comfort in the company of iends—lighthearted and comic (Kevin Smith), hyper Dennis Jaeger) and playboy Fritz othy Olyphant).

secrets about her supposedly ct fiance surface, Gray comes to new sides of the man she ght she knew.

ie movie is available on VCD DVD. (Sony Pictures Home En- nment/Magnavision).

speration'

sing as cop Collie Entragian Perlman), the evil Tak is able to his prey while surveying the st empty highway that leads to from the once proud mining of Desperation.

ught in the deceptive web are us author Johnny Marville, and Ellie Carver and son l.

m Skeritt, Steven Weber, les Durning, Annabeth Gish Henry Thomas also star.

enang . . .

page D1

ed "Now & Forever" over) with Malaysian actress e Lee. Alfred has stellar g and a solo shot in the plug. n easily give Malay actors a for their ringgit and make salivate with *inggit*.

oring icons

S impressed by how much ysians revere their film . They built a museum in r of their greatest artist, P. lee; adjacent to the house e he grew up in Penang. If we could do the same thing at Pinoy icons who have ahead won't fade into obliv-

priceless memories of ysia will definitely not fade way. *Terima kasih* to my su- fun Penang gang—**Sarah ista** of Tourism Malaysia, nce lifestyle writer **Bernard tran**, Manila Bulletin's se **Camet**, Philippine Star's ph **Cortes** and Business d High Life magazine's **Elias rero**—for making Malaysia *Masaya*. Special thanks also **alyn Carmona** for giving me nderful taste of Penang and a Lumpur, our dependable guide **Ismail Ibrahim**, Pre- **en Kannan** (editor-in-chief MASCOM Design Sdn Bhd) Hotel Maya's PR **Mark or de Souza** for the warm re- on.

you ever visit KL, check out hotel. I run out of superla- describing it.

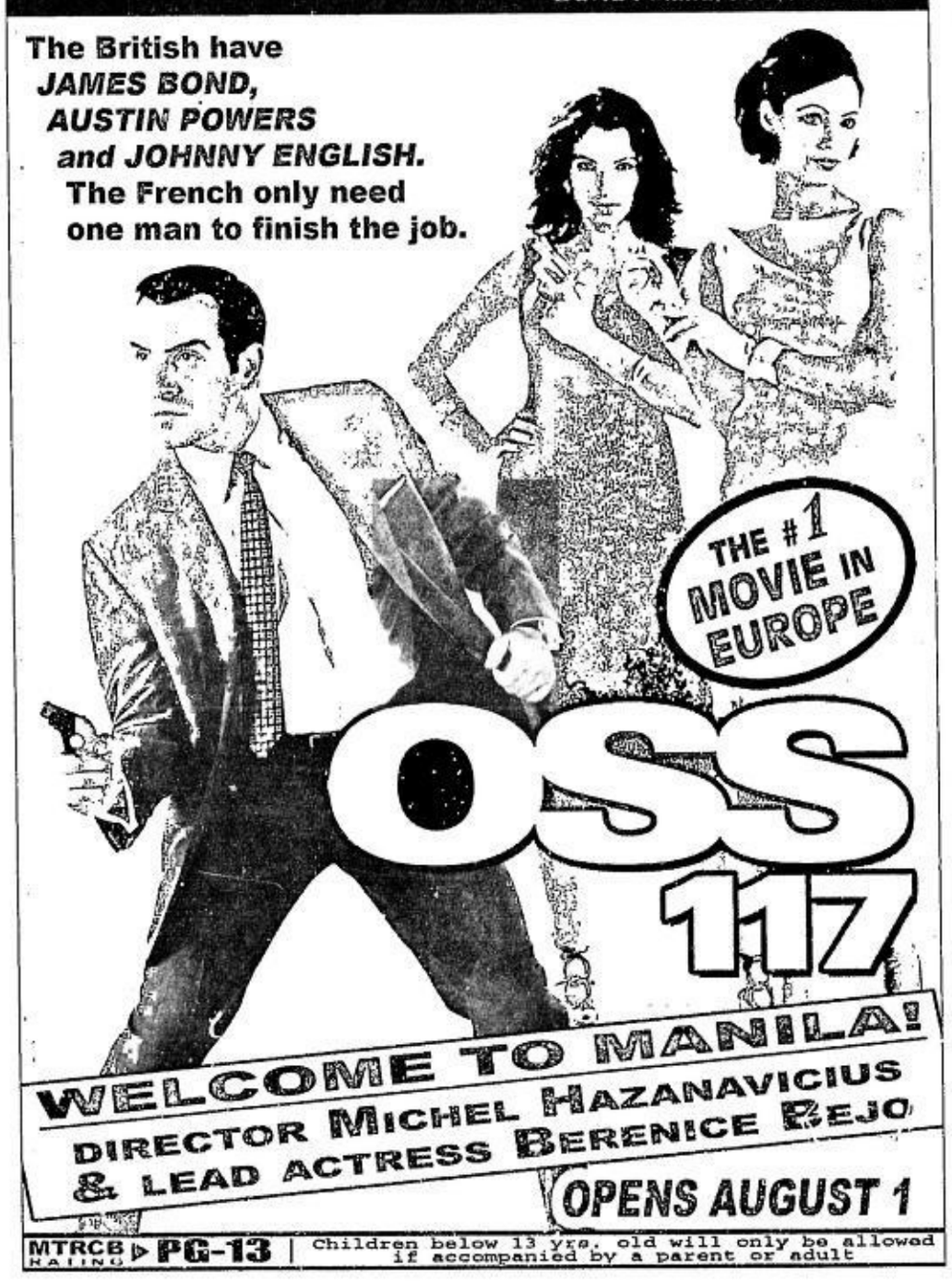
st like the spicy Malay food, rst trip to Penang and KL re- piced up my life with inter- g stuff and unforgettable s. I am still in a Malaysia of mind. That surely puts me tter shape to endure the dai- ow biz masquerade.

nail wateringholeshangri- ahoo.com.

"OSS 117 is BETTER THAN 007."
~French Ambassador Gerard Chesnel

"One of the MOST ENTERTAINING FILM of the year. The premiere night crowd was beyond appreciative, LAUGHING SO HARD at one joke, they very nearly missed the next."
~Kim Voynar, cinematical.com

"It's damned FUNNY. The laughs go from smirks to soda spittters. Joy has been in short supply at the movies lately, and OSS 117 was a SHEER DELIGHT."
~David Poland, MCN Reviews



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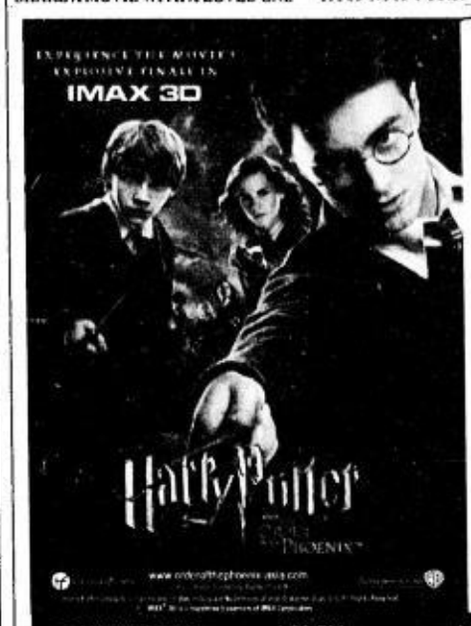


Don't miss the most anticipated movie event of the year!
Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix
Experience the movie's explosive finale in IMAX 3D at SAN MIGUEL Coca-Cola IMAX THEATRE
Tickets now available.
P 350 (Monday to Thursday, before 5pm)
P 400 (Monday to Thursday, 5pm onwards, Friday, Saturday & Sunday, Holiday whole day)
Please call 556-IMAX (4629) or 556 0242 for inquiries and reservations.
NOW SHOWING

SCREENING TIME	1:00 PM	4:00 PM	7:00 PM	10:00 PM
JULY 31 TUESDAY	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

METRO MANILA

SM MALL OF ASIA 556-0104
1 THE SIMPSONS
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 RATATOUILLE
5 DIE HARD 4
6 BLIND DATING

PREMIERE CINEMA
OUIJA

CENTERSTAGE
RESERVED

DIRECTOR'S CLUB
Bookings now accepted. Inquire at 556-2314.

THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
RATATOUILLE
CINEMA 2
THE SIMPSONS
633-8976
For ticket reservation, dial 6338976

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
1 THE SIMPSONS
2 RATATOUILLE
3 HARRY POTTER 5
4 OUIJA
5 TRANSFORMERS
6 OUIJA
7 RATATOUILLE
8 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN
9 DIE HARD 4
10 BLIND DATING
11 HARRY POTTER 5
12 OUIJA

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 OUIJA
2 RATATOUILLE
3 HARRY POTTER 5
4 TRANSFORMERS
5 VACANCY
6 RATATOUILLE
7 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN
8 OUIJA
9 THE SIMPSONS
10 OUIJA
11 DIE HARD 4
12 BLIND DATING

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 BLIND DATING
2 OUIJA
3 WHITE NOISE
4 HARRY POTTER 5
5 DIE HARD 4
6 THE SIMPSONS
7 OUIJA
8 RATATOUILLE
9 TRANSFORMERS
10 VACANCY
11 PLANET TERROR
12 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 TRANSFORMERS
3 RATATOUILLE
4 THE SIMPSONS
5 OUIJA
6 PLANET TERROR
7 DIE HARD 4
8 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN
9 BLIND DATING
10 VACANCY

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 RATATOUILLE
2 TRANSFORMERS
3 HARRY POTTER 5
4 THE SIMPSONS
5 BLIND DATING
6 OUIJA

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1 THE SIMPSONS
2 OUIJA
3 OUIJA
4 RATATOUILLE
5 TRANSFORMERS
6 HARRY POTTER 5
7 BLIND DATING
8 DIE HARD 4
9 VACANCY

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 THE SIMPSONS
3 OUIJA
4 RATATOUILLE

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 TRANSFORMERS
2 BLIND DATING
3 RATATOUILLE
4 DIE HARD 4
5 THE SIMPSONS
6 HARRY POTTER 5
7 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN
8 PLANET TERROR
9 OUIJA
10 HARRY POTTER 5
11 TIYANAKS
12 VACANCY

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 THE SIMPSONS
3 RATATOUILLE
4 OUIJA

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 THE SIMPSONS
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 OUIJA
4 RATATOUILLE

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
1 RATATOUILLE
2 OUIJA
3 HARRY POTTER 5
4 THE SIMPSONS

movietime Event Calendar

ROBIN WILLIAMS MANDY MOORE JOHN KRASINSKI
LICENSE to WED

Couples soon to tie the knot are invited to come and visit the
LICENSE to WED
Wedding Exhibit
July 26 to 31
SM Megamall cinema lobby
Plan your dream wedding with cakes from The Red Ribbon, gowns and flowers from The Wedding Library, portraits from IMOGEN Photography and catering arrangements from Platong Pinoy

Presented to you by:
SM CINEMA 96.3 W ROCK

REGULAR SHOWING STARTS AUGUST 1

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868
1 THE SIMPSONS
2 HARRY POTTER
3 RATATOUILLE
4 OUIJA
5 OUIJA
6 TRANSFORMERS
7 DIE HARD 4
8 BLIND DATING

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 THE SIMPSONS
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 RATATOUILLE
5 OUIJA
6 DIE HARD 4/ OUIJA

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 OUIJA
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 RATATOUILLE

LUZON

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 RATATOUILLE
2 OUIJA
3 HARRY POTTER 5
4 ZODIAC

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)8637681-85
1 OUIJA
2 OUIJA
3 HARRY POTTER 5
4 RATATOUILLE
5 THE SIMPSONS
6 OUIJA

SM CIY LIPA (043) 784-0187
1 RATATOUILLE
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 OUIJA
4 TRANSFORMERS

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7106977-80
1 OUIJA
2 RATATOUILLE
3 THE SIMPSONS
4 HARRY POTTER 5

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
1 OUIJA
2 THE SIMPSONS
3 RATATOUILLE
4 HARRY POTTER 5

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 OUIJA
3 THE SIMPSONS
4 RATATOUILLE

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)6349811
1 THE SIMPSONS
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 RATATOUILLE
4 OUIJA

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 BORDERTOWN
3 OUIJA
4 DIE HARD 4
5 THE SIMPSONS
6 RATATOUILLE

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 RATATOUILLE
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 THE SIMPSONS
4 OUIJA

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 RATATOUILLE
2 ZODIAC
3 TRANSFORMERS
4 OUIJA
5 HARRY POTTER 5
6 THE SIMPSONS
7 RESERVED
8 DIE HARD 4

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 TRANSFORMERS
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 RATATOUILLE
4 THE SIMPSONS
5 OUIJA
6 NEXT
7 OUIJA
8 DIE HARD 4

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010
1 RATATOUILLE
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 THE SIMPSONS
4 OUIJA

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

MTRCB PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

OPENS AUGUST 1

TATANGGAPIN KAYA TAYO NG JAPAN KAPAG LUMUBOG ANG 'PINAS?

SHOCKING BUT TRUE!
AS HOT AS TODAY'S HEADLINES
EARTHQUAKES, TSUNAMIS, VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS...
FIRST JAPAN...THEN SOUTHEAST ASIA
SINKING OF JAPAN
MANY ELEMENTS IN THIS MOVIE ARE BASED ON REAL FACTS

SHOWING TODAY!

Felino Tañada's
HANGGANG DITO NA LAMANG AT MARAMING SALAMAT PO

This is the film adaptation of Orlando Nadres' breakthrough play about homosexuality, starring Nonie Buencamino as a repressed pawnshop owner, Jon Santos, as the town's beautician, and Jerwin Mercado as the man that will change their lives forever.

indieSine

R-18! APPROVED WITHOUT CUTS!

Araneta Center araneta center.net
Gateway Mall FarmersPlaza gatewaymall.com.ph

Gateway CinePlex*10 — ONLY CINEPLEX IN THE COUNTRY — EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE

THE SIMPSONS 12:20 / 1:10 / 2:30 / 3:20 / 4:40 / 5:30 / 6:50 / 7:40 / 9:00
BLIND DATING 12:10 / 2:30 / 4:50 / 7:10 / 9:30
OUIJA BOARD 1:10 / 3:20 / 5:30 / 7:40 / 9:50
RATATOUILLE 11:30 / 1:35 / 2:10 / 4:15 / 4:50 / 6:55 / 7:30 / 9:35
HARRY POTTER 5 12:50 / 3:50 / 6:50 / 9:50
TRANSFORMERS 12:50 / 3:50 / 6:50 / 9:50
DIE HARD 4 1:20 / 4:10 / 7:00 / 9:50
THE SIMPSONS 1:50 / 4:00
RATATOUILLE 6:20 / 9:10

Mall 5
1 OUIJA BOARD 12:00 / 2:10 / 4:20 / 6:30 / 8:40
2 THE SIMPSONS 11:45 / 2:00 / 4:15 / 6:30 / 8:45
3 RATATOUILLE 12:15 / 2:55 / 5:35 / 8:15
4 PLANET TERROR 2:20 / 2:20 / 4:20 / 6:20 / 8:20
5 HARRY POTTER 5 12:40 / 3:20 / 6:00 / 8:40
Dolby Digital SDDS

For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph

ARANETA COLISEUM www.aranetacoliseum.com
ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK
LIVE! AUGUST 19 SUN / 7PM • BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW!

CLICK!

SARAH JESSICA PARKER

Oprah specials

IT'S AN ALL-STAR concert on Hallmark Channel when Carrie Underwood sings her most popular song, Gayle King shares her ideas for a video featuring her and favorite artist Josh Groban and Tony Bennett performs his greatest hits with duets with Big Band sensation Michael Buble.

The "Oprah" episode, called "What's Playing on Your iPOD Concert," airs on Aug. 12 at 8 p.m.

On Aug. 19 at 8 p.m., Sarah Jessica Parker shows viewers how they can look fab without spending a fortune.

The actress reveal her new passion for fashion designing plus creations from her high fashion label.

One mom turned trash into major cash, with Paula Deen giving her recipe of success in the episode "Moms Who Made Millions" on Aug. 31, 2 p.m.

AT THE CINEMAS

Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729-7777

GLORIETTA 1	1 TRANSFORMERS	2 THE SIMPSONS	3 RATATOUILLE	4 OUIJA
GLORIETTA 4	1 RATATOUILLE	2 OUIJA	3 THX THE SIMPSONS GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 BLIND DATING	5 DIE HARD 4.0	6 THE SIMPSONS	7 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX
GREENBELT 1	1 TRANSFORMERS	2 THE SIMPSONS		
GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE SIMPSONS GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX RATATOUILLE GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX GUARANTEED SEATS	4 BLIND DATING / RATATOUILLE GUARANTEED SEATS	5 THE SIMPSONS GUARANTEED SEATS	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX RATATOUILLE	2 THE SIMPSONS		
	3 THE SIMPSONS	4 THE SIMPSONS	5 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 THE SIMPSONS	2 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	3 RATATOUILLE	4 OUIJA
MARKET! MARKET!	1 OUIJA	2 THE SIMPSONS		
	3 RATATOUILLE	4 BLIND DATING	5 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	
TRINOMA • THX Cinemas • All-Digital Sound • All-Digital Seating • Computerized Ticketing System • Recliner Seats	1 OUIJA	2 DIE HARD 4.0	3 HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX GUARANTEED SEATS	4 THE SIMPSONS GUARANTEED SEATS
	5 BLIND DATING / TRANSFORMERS	6 THE SIMPSONS	7 THX RATATOUILLE GUARANTEED SEATS	

AYALA MALLS CINEMAS STARGAZING
Meet & greet the star
A LOVE STORY
MARICEL SORIANO AGA MULACH
and other surprise guests

August 5, 2007 • Sunday
5:00 pm
Glorietta Activity Center

Reserved seats for the first 200 moviegoers who will present any movie ticket purchased in any Ayala Malls Cinemas on August 5, 2007.

Movie opens August 15, 2007 at Ayala Malls

AT THE MALLS

CONCIERGE HOTLINE NUMBERS:
Glorietta - 752 7272
Greenbelt - 757 4853 to 54
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; 772 1860
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc. 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519
TriNoma - 901 3000

Ayala

Glorietta — Mechanical Imago
July 27 to 29, 2007 at the Activity Center

Greenbelt — Shop & Travel at Greenbelt 1 Promo
Get a chance to win exciting prizes and a trip for two to Boracay for every P300 worth of purchase at any Greenbelt 1 establishment from July 1 to September 30, 2007

Alabang Town Center — Clear Mall Animation Activation
July 28 & 29, 2007 at the Activity Center

Ayala Center Cebu — Ciba Vision Exhibit
July 27 to 29, 2007 at Paseos

Market! Market! — Metro Fashion Week
July 13 to 31, 2007 at participating Metro departments

Ayala OnStage — Repertory Philippines presents Disney's CINDERELLA Kids at REP's Globe Theater. Opens August 11, 2007
For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710

Ayala Museum — KANDUNGAN - a solo exhibition of metal sculptures by Daniel dela Cruz
July 24 to August 6, 2007
For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org

TriNoma — Magic 89.9's Amped on the Ramp
July 27, 2007 at the Activity Center

Mechanical Imago
August 3 to 5, 2007 at the Activity Center

IMAGO ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS
MECHANICAL ACTION
A theatrical circus performance of man-powered machines and acrobatic acts.

Glorietta Activity Center
July 27-29
11:30 am, 3 pm & 6 pm

Alabang Town Center Activity Center
August 17-19
11 am, 3 pm & 6 pm

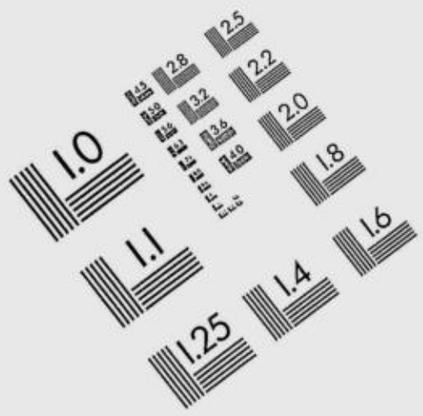
TriNoma Activity Center
August 3-5
11:30 am, 3 pm & 6 pm

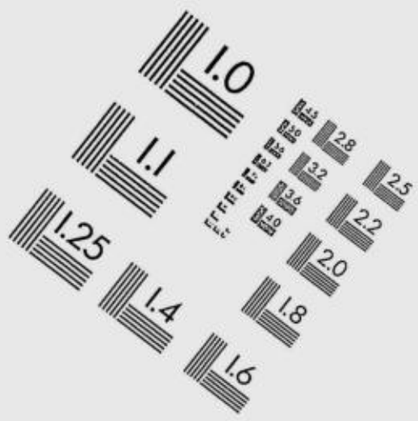
Ayala Center Cebu OnStage
August 24-26
1 pm, 4 pm & 6:30 pm

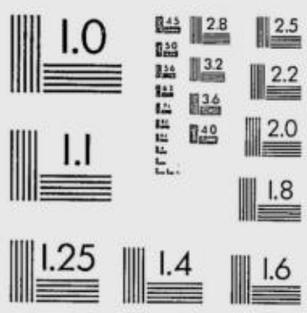
Market! Market! Activity Center
August 10-12
1 pm, 3:30 pm & 6 pm

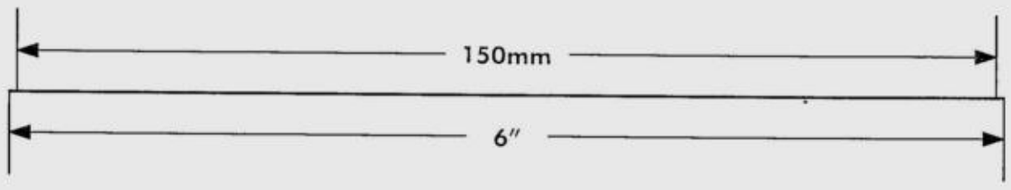
Glorietta Greenbelt Alabang Town Center Ayala Center Cebu Market! Market! TriNoma

IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (MT-3)









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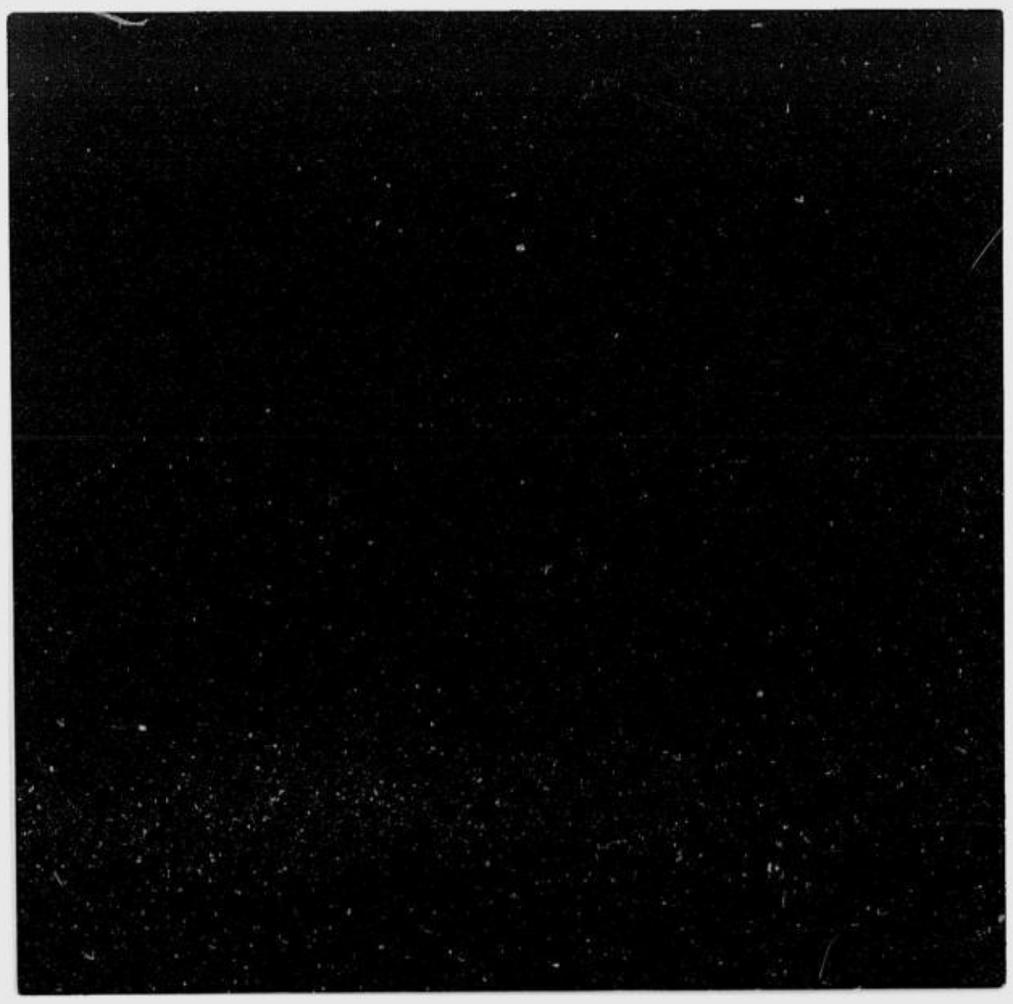

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, PHILIPPINES

JULY

16 THRU 31

2007

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

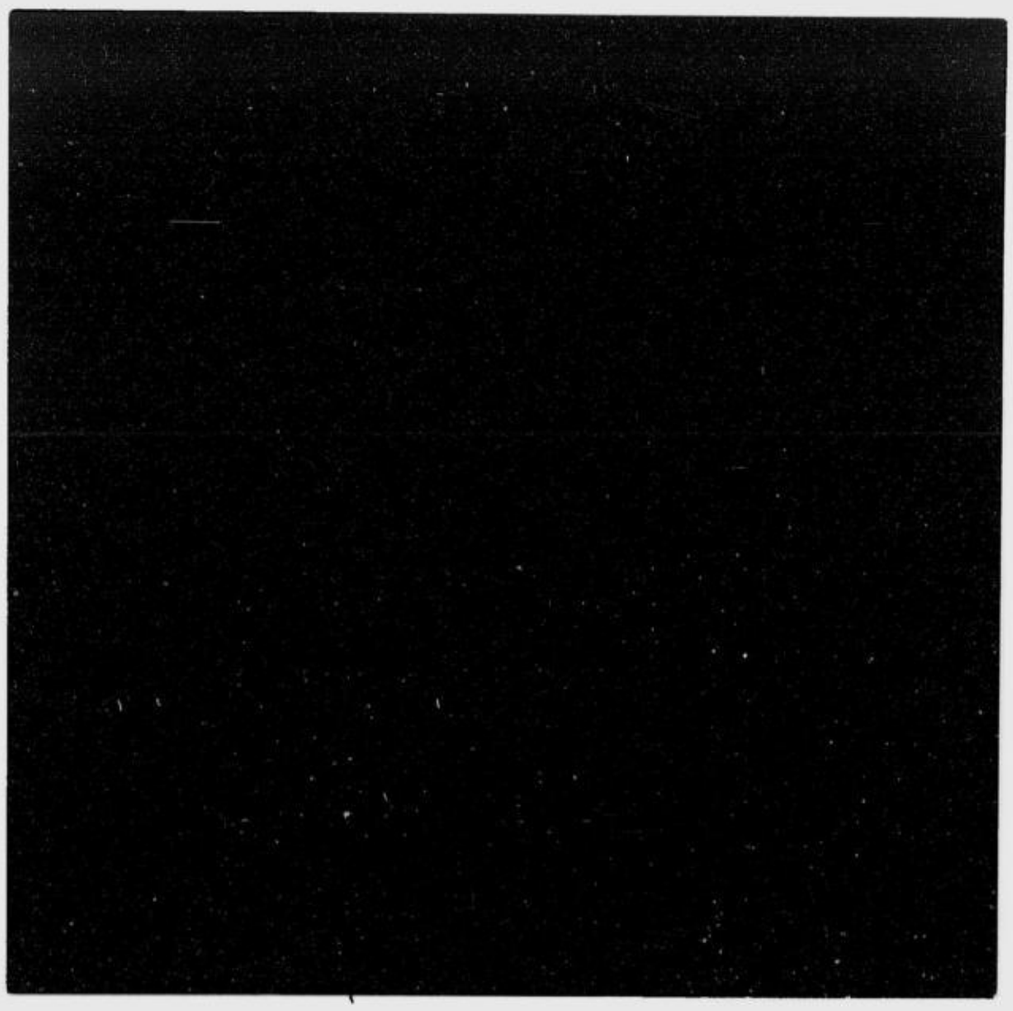
MANILA, PHILIPPINES

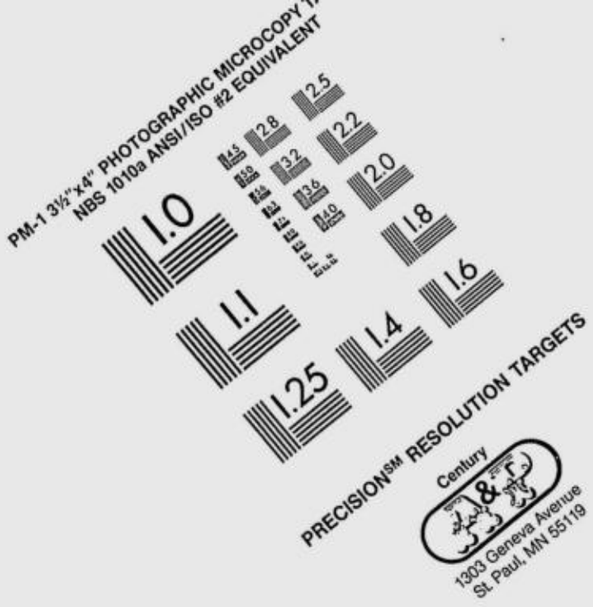
JUNE

1 THRU 15

2007

REEL 406





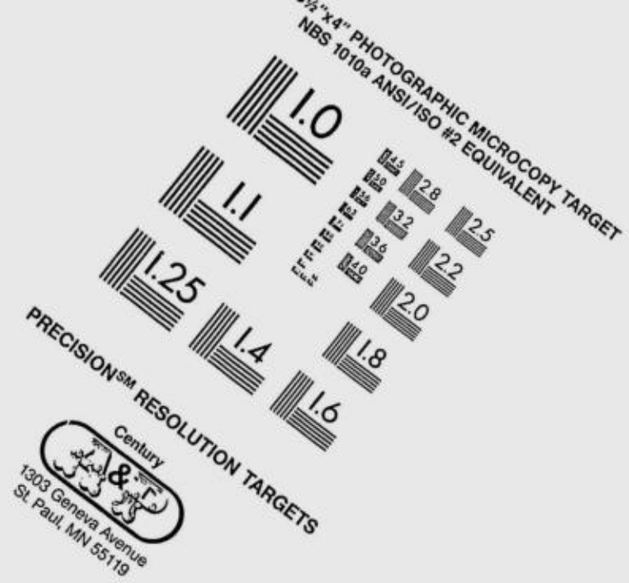
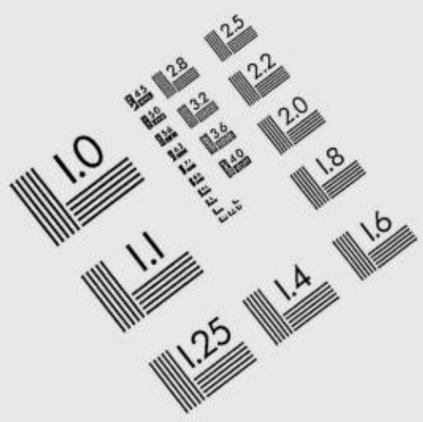
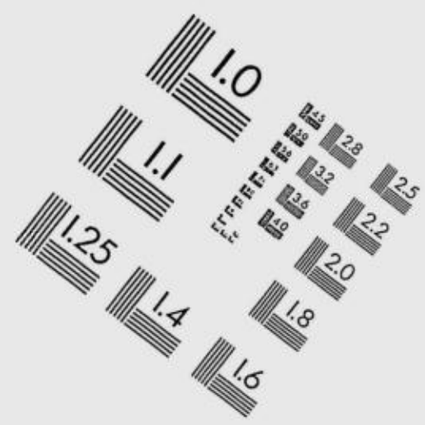
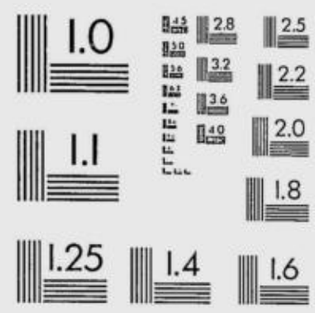
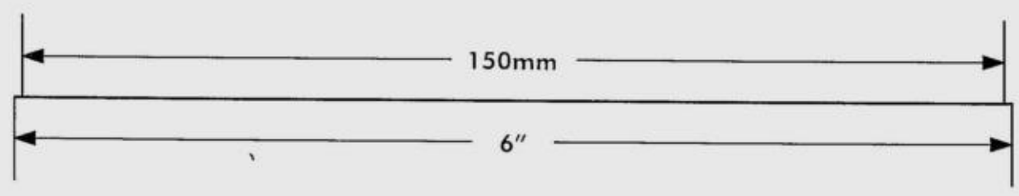


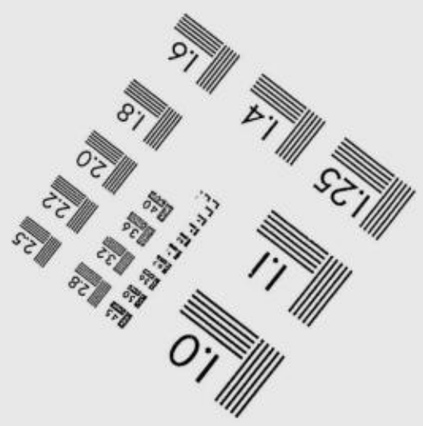
IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (MT-3)











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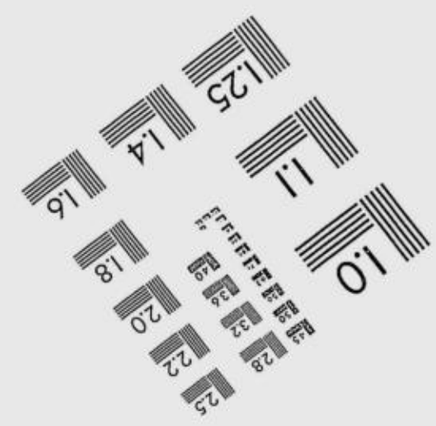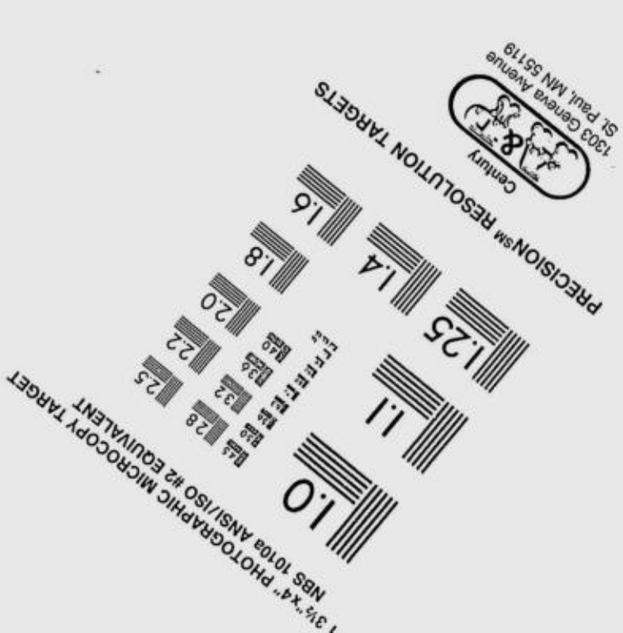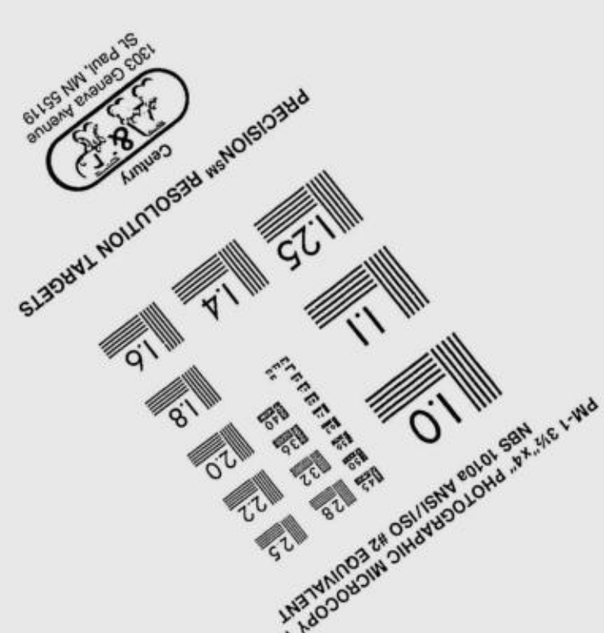
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